Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

FBIS-NES-94-023
Thursday
3 February 1994

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FBIS-NES-94-023 *3 February 1994*

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Arab-Israeli Talks

No Progress Reported at 12th Round in Washington

TA0302054194 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] The 12th round of peace talks between Israel and Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and the Palestinians will end in Washington this afternoon. Our correspondent in Washington Arye Golan reports that, in all, eight meetings attended by only few officials were held far from the media. Despite this format, no substantial progress is reported on any of the tracks. The talks will resume in Washington in about two weeks.

Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres hopes it will be possible to finalize two or three clauses with Yasir 'Arafat in Cairo next week in order to pave the road for implementing the autonomy agreement in the territories. Minister Peres spoke with correspondents in the White House before meeting U.S. Vice President Al Gore. He emphasized that the two sides are trying to adhere to the timetable, but it will not adversely affect the negotiations if they continue another week or another month.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has rejected a proposal to send Yo'el Singer, the Foreign Ministry's legal adviser, to talks with the PLO representatives in Cairo this week. Mr. Rabin decided that the talks will not be resumed before Foreign Minister Peres returns from the United States. This is reported by our political correspondent Shlomo Raz.

In the Davos talks it has transpired that the Palestinians want to establish outposts manned by Palestinian policemen along the traffic axes in the Gaza Strip. Israel is opposed to this. Prime Minister Rabin is also opposed to the deployment of Palestinian customs inspectors at the crossing points.

Arms Control, Regional Security Committee Meets

Palestinian Official Comments

NC0302103594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0830 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 3 Feb (MENA)—Ziyad Abu-Zayyad, head of the Palestinian delegation to the meetings of the committee on arms control and regional security stemming from the multilateral talks, has stated that the Palestinian party is still opposed to and has reservations on the proposed joint paper that is being discussed by the subcommittee because it contains certain political issues that should not be discussed by the arms control committee. In a statement to MENA today on the sidelines of the committee meeting, he said that the paper still contains numerous political items that are the jurisdiction of the bilateral negotiations, which are considered to be the basis of the political process. He noted that the paper that will be adopted at the conclusion of the meetings in Cairo will not be "a recommendation" but a "draft" that will be submitted to the Arab countries to give their official view. It will then be put forward to the general arms control committee meeting scheduled for April.

Meanwhile, an official source in the United Arab Emirates delegation participating in the meetings of the arms control and regional security committee said that the United States and Russia, in their capacity as cosponsors of the peace conference should endorse on any joint principles adopted by the current meetings in Cairo and not just take a neutral stand. In a statement to MENA, he said that his country insists on the two cosponsors' approval and endorsement of any formula on principles reached by the Middle East countries so that both countries will be committed to that formula in the future. He said that this point is still under discussion because both cosponsors favor a neutral stance on the position the conferees intend to adopt.

Israelis 'Expressing Reservations'

NC0302112194 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0955 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 3 Feb (MENA)—An Arab diplomatic source has said that the committee on arms control and regional security, emanating from the multilateral talks on peace in the Middle East and now meeting in Cairo, has not yet reached an agreement on arms control because the Israelis are expressing reservations at conducting a detailed discussion of the subject.

The source told MENA today that the Israelis are mainly concentrating on the first part—arrangements for regional security with a view toward breaking the Arab wall around Israel.

The source said the Israeli delegation wants to finish promptly with security arrangements, as this would mean an implicit recognition of Israel by the region's states, while it refrains from entering into a detailed discussion of arms control.

It should be noted that the prevailing view among the delegates is that the two subjects must be discussed together without focussing on one to the exclusion of the other.

Inter-Arab Affairs

League Chief Protests Israeli Settlement to UN

NC0202142594 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1320 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 2 Feb (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has stated that Israel's building of a new settlement on the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem further violates international legitimacy and challenges the international community's will.

In a message to UN Secretary General Dr. Butrus Butrus-Ghali on the issue, 'Abd-al-Majid denounced the Israeli measures, which constitute a major obstacle to the peace process.

He asked the United Nations to play its moral and legal role in taking care of nations under occupation, including the Palestinian people. The Arab League secretary general stressed that Dr. Butrus-Ghali's efforts in this regard will have the greatest effect on Arab and world public opinion.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid also sent a message to Rawhi al-Khatib, the Arab mayor of Jerusalem who was deported after 1967 and who resides in Amman, explaining the Arab League's efforts and contacts on the issue.

Plan of Omani Banks in Line With Bid To Boost Sector

NC0202125494 Paris AFP in English 1156 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Report by Nadim Kawash]

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Feb 2 (AFP)—Two more Omani banks are planning to merge to benefit from attractive incentives offered by the Central Bank to encourage mergers as part of overall economic reforms in the oil-rich Gulf state.

The Oman Arab Bank (OAB) and the Oman-European Bank (OEB) have been involved in negotiations for merger, which will be the third in Oman since the Central Bank announced the incentives three years ago, bankers said on Wednesday [2 February].

"We are holding negotiations but they are still in their initial stages," OAB general manager, 'Abd-al Qadir 'Asqalan, told AFP by telephone from Muscat.

"The capitals of both banks already meet the requirements set by the Central Bank but the merger is in line with the government policy to cut the number of banks and strengthen the banking sector."

Oman had 11 national banks and 12 foreign units before mergers were launched and the Central Bank issued instructions for raising their capital to at least 10 million Omani riyals (26 million dollars).

The first mergers involved the Bank of Muscat with Al-Ahli Bank and the Oman Commercial Bank with the Omani Al-Masraf institutions. All of them merged to ensure their capital meet Central Bank requirements and to raise their adequacy in line with guidelines by the Bank for International Settlement [BIS].

Central Bank incentives for merging banks include a deposit of 10 million riyals (26 million dollars) for 10 years with an interest rate of three percent and exemption of taxes on profits for five years.

Officials have said they wanted to halve the number of banks on the grounds the local market is relatively small.

"Mergers will strengthen the banking sector as they will boost the financial position of banks and cut competition in the local market," said Mansur al-Zakwani, banking chief at the Omani Chamber of Commerce and Industry. "This will also enable banks to face foreign competition."

'Asqalan, whose bank is owned by the Jordanian Arab Bank and the Omani International Company for Development and Investment, said merging with OEB could give birth to a bank with a capital of 20 million riyals (52 million dollars) as the two have a capital of 26 million dollars each.

"We do not want to talk about the situation now as we have not yet entered into details. But we might raise the capital later," he said.

Other Gulf states are urging their banks to merge or raise their capital to strengthen their financial position and meet the eight-percent level set by BIS as a floor for capital adequacy, the ratio between shareholders equity and assets. The BIS move, which took effect in January, is intended to ensure banks worldwide have enough funds to face a financial crisis.

Most of them have reported positive results of their measures, which included stronger intervention in banks, regular inspection of their balance sheets and incentives to merging units. In the United Arab Emirates, officials said the adequacy of the country's 47 banks had exceeded 10 percent.

The banking measures in Oman run parallel with large-scale reforms to revive the economy and lessen reliance on unstable oil earnings.

The reforms include privatisations, freeing interest rates on loans, new incentives to investors, opening up the stock market, and upgrading the infrastructure to attract foreign capital.

Palestinian Affairs

'Text' of Arafat's Speech in Geneva Reported

LD0202232494 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 2 Feb 94

["Text" of speech by Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee, at the Human Rights Commission in Geneva on 1 February—read by announcer]

[Excerpts] Mr. Chairman, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, assistant general secretary for human rights, Mr. Petrovskiy, heads and members of delegations, ladies and gentlemen. [passage omitted]

Mr. Chairman, your committee's session is being held at a very important and critical period in view of the international changes and their impact on human rights in various parts of the world.

The international changes which put an end to the Cold War period were accompanied by many regional and internal wars in Asia, Africa, Europe, and Latin America. As regards the Middle East, the situation is still the same and the volcano of its wars has not settled yet. You know,

ladies and gentlemen, the numerous human rights violations generated by these wars. Human rights violations perpetrated during wars or foreign occupation resulting from war may be the worst and the most serious ones, and in any case of war, people are the victims, be this war real or cold, international or regional or internal.

The result is always victims among people. No one can predict putting an end to one kind of war and ignore other kinds of wars which are themselves resulting from other wars. The Cold War has come to an end but other wars have been ignited and they are ceaselessly threatening to expand.

Mr. Chairman, it is my pleasure to inform you from this solemn rostrum that out of our commitment to human rights, democratic freedoms, international laws, and the UN Charter, and out of our concern for building a healthy, dynamic, open, and active society, our first decision dated 30 September 1993 following the decision to establish a Palestinian National Authority, was to approve the creation of the higher Palestinian national human rights commission as an independent body.

The decision stipulates that the task of this commission is to follow up and secure the provision of the requirements for the protection of human rights in all Palestinian laws, legislation, and systems, as well as in the work of the various services, bodies, and institutions belonging to the Palestinian national authority.

We confirmed a few weeks ago the official recognition of this body which will include a number of moral and legal personalities and it will be chaired by sister Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi.

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, if we look at the world's geopolitical map from the perspective of the principles of human rights and international humanitarian law, we would not be able to move from one place to another without putting our fingers on grave and systematic violations of human rights, whether by torture or other forms of inhumane treatment, premeditated killing, arbitrary execution, detention and arrest without trial, racism, racial discrimination and segregation, foreign occupation and domination, hatred of immigrants and the emergence of neo Nazism, poverty and deliberate impoverishment, all forms of denial of national, economic, social and cultural rights, right of self-determination of peoples under foreign occupation and domination, religious extremism, terrorism, state terrorism, discrimination against women, and the absence of the sovereignty of law. This is why I have the pleasure of praising the Vienna Human Rights Declaration which emanated from the international conference on human rights held in Vienna in the middle of last year. I would also like to praise the United Nations General Assembly's decision to adopt this important declaration.

Ladies and gentlemen, at two previous sessions I addressed you on the state of human rights everywhere in the world and, specifically, in Palestine. I addressed you on human rights and the occasional [ahyanan] violations, exploitation, and mistreatment to which these rights are exposed. [passage omitted]

I have also spoken to you about the extent of the suffering of our Palestinian people under Israeli occupation as a result of violations of human rights and basic liberties, which the violations have extended to include all rights without exception, starting with violation of the right to live and ending with violation of the right of expression. This was achieved by subjecting our people to deliberate killing, torture, arbitrary arrest, deportation, seizure of land and building settlements on them, collective punishment, disruption of educational programs, closure of schools and universities, attacks on places of worship and holy places, closure of trade unions, destruction of the Palestinian national economy and our people's right to exercise self-determination in their territory. Furthermore, the occupation in itself constitutes a grave violation of our people's human rights in our occupied land.

Your respected committee has dealt with this painful reality for more than 26 years, and has rejected and condemned it, and called for its end. It has also called for Israel's withdrawal from the Palestinian territories, including Holy Jerusalem and the other Arab territories it occupied by force in 1967, as a radical solution for the deterioration of human rights and the return of the Palestinian people's right to their homeland and self-determination without external interference. This action has been taken through its numerous resolutions which have continued with its latest, 49th, session in which it appointed Mr. Rene Felber as special envoy for investigation into Israel's violations of the principles of international law, international human law, and the provisions of the fourth Geneva agreement in our occupied land. [passage omitted]

Mr. Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, our Palestinian people, who have made huge sacrifices for decades in order to recover their homeland and rights, are the people most in need of a just and comprehensive peace because of foreign occupation and the injustice and tragedies of expulsion as a result of that, as well as denial of their national rights. These rights were affirmed by your respected commission, the UN General Assembly, the UN Security Council, and the other international meetings and were strengthened by the principles of international legality and international law.

Our people's struggle for peace has become linked to our deep conviction in peace based on justice, and there is no peace with occupation or aggression and denial of rights. On this basis, we have continuously responded to all the international peace initiatives which led in the end to the Madrid Conference and the resulting negotiations in Washington and Oslo, which also produced the agreement on the Declaration of Principles which was signed in Washington on 13 September last between the PLO and Israel's Government, as well as the declaration of mutual recognition between the PLO and Israel.

The signing of the above mentioned agreement came as a first step expressing good intentions and goodwill to achieve the peace of the brave, which is based on justice and respect for human rights, a peace which turns the page of history containing the occupation, tragedies, wars, and hostilities. It is also a peace which opens wide prospects before a new stage of relations, of fruitful cooperation between the Palestinian and the Israeli peoples which will be based on good neighborliness, mutual respect, and solving conflicts with peaceful means, dialogue, and arbitration.

The signing of this agreement under the auspices of President Clinton, the evidence of the U.S. and Russian co-sponsors of the conference, and the blessing of the whole world formed the first necessary step to move forward on the road of finding a comprehensive and just settlement to the conflict in the Middle East on the basis of implementing Security Council's resolutions 242 and 338. [passage omitted]

We entered these talks with good intentions to achieve a comprehensive and just peace, and we are still pursuing them with good intention. We hope that the Israeli Government has the same good intention and gives it a concrete form toward the agreement by adhering completely to it in letter and and in spirit. [passage omitted]

All this took place after the signing of the agreement in Washington. It stirred up negative reactions among our Palestinian people, the Arab masses, and the peoples of the region and generated convictions that the Israeli Government is not serious in implementing this agreement. The seriousness of this is doubled by Israel which places obstacles to the implementation of the agreement and attempts to change its aims according to its whims, for example, the redeployment of Israeli forces in the Gaza Strip and the Jericho region instead of withdrawing from them in accordance with the Declaration of Principles, in addition to other problems. These attempts still form the major characteristic of the Israeli negotiators, and this motivated us to look for the good intentions and the measures to make the required confidence available in order to move forward toward the hoped for goals in a comprehensive and just peace, which we have not managed to feel so far.

Mr. Chairman, we would like to affirm to you our unyielding faith in the peace process, and on the basis of that we will continue to give impetus to the whole of the peace process, including negotiations. We will not be swayed by any maneuvers, retractions, or frustrations. We hope that the Israeli side will understand that this agreement has a clear perspective in so far as it concerns Palestinian human rights. We interpret past violations as a result of the occupation. We have to equate them now with a new action created by the spirit and prospect of peace. Therefore, we hope, and undoubtedly you share our hope, that we will see Israel setting out to implement the rules of the fourth Geneva Accord and the principles of international law, and abandon their old methods, fanaticism, and prevarication so that we will be able to work together in order to reach the peace and security which we all aspire to.

In light of these developments, the need for the international community to persistently bear its responsibilities regarding the issue of Palestine is firmly established. Any attempt to marginalize the role of the international community, represented in the United Nations, in this issue is an attempt to vilify international legitimacy and to undermine its principles on the basis of which the peace process was built, starting with drawing on the UN Charter and the UN Security Council resolutions and ending with guaranteeing the Palestinian people's right to exercise their national rights as a basis for reaching a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the Middle East region.

We would like to stress that the results of the peace process and the ongoing negotiations must be based on the rulings of international legitimacy and the principles of international law as a means of safeguarding the noble principles of the international community which the world has accepted as an instrument to establish the bases of justice, friendship, and the resolution of disputes among states by peaceful means. For our part, we will push with all our strength to ensure the success of the peace process so that our future generations and our children and their children will be able to live in peace, security, stability, harmony, and freedom far away from threats, repression, violence, and wars. To that end, I turn to you, for your honorable commission to continue its mission of defending our people and their right to their homeland, and putting an end to human rights violations and protecting human rights in our occupied land for as long as the occupation continues, particularly in the transitional phase during which the occupation forces will remain in parts of our land. [passage omitted]

'Arafat on Talks With Peres, Ties With Syria

JN0302101894 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 3 Feb 94 pp 1, 20

[Interview with PLO Chairman Yasir 'Arafat by Jerome Cochlaine in Geneva on 2 February; published "by special arrangement with WNL," acronym not further expanded]

[Text] [Cochlaine] You have ended several days of talks with Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and it seems that final agreement on self-rule in Gaza and Jericho is now imminent. Can you explain to us the progress that has been achieved so far?

['Arafat] True, we have almost reached a final agreement during my meeting with Mr. Peres in Davos and we are very close to signing an agreement which can be called the Davos agreement. The Israelis, however, need a few more days before ratifying the agreement. I will meet again with Mr. Peres and [Israeli Prime Minister] Mr. Rabin in Cairo.

[Cochlaine] What about control over the border crossing points with Jordan and access to the Dead Sea?

['Arafat] We discussed these topics at length and we are now discussing the details. I cannot say anything further at this point.

[Cochlaine] You made concessions, for instance, over the size of the self-rule area around Jericho—from 340 square km to 55 square km. Are you willing to make further concessions?

['Arafat] I reject the term "concessions" because the achievement of peace is more important than anything else. That is why I speak about "the peace of the brave." We will implement everything that was agreed upon with the Israelis. Similar negotiations were held between Algeria and France in the early 1960's and between South Africa's President Frederick de Klerk and my friend, Nelson Mandela.

[Cochlaine] Do you think the Israelis will witi.draw from Gaza and Jericho on 13 April as agreed in the timetable of the peace agreement that was signed in 13 September 1993?

['Arafat] I hope the Israelis will respect the agreement and redeploy their forces in the territories according to plan.

[Cochlaine] Will there be elections in July?

['Arafat] I hope the Israelis will not postpone them. Rabin had stated that there are no sacred dates, but our position is that the agreements which were signed must be respected and implemented.

[Cochlaine] What role will the elected council play in comparison with that of the Palestinian National Authority? Will there be two government agencies competing with each other?

['Arafat] The Palestinian National Authority is a permanent body that was set up by a Palestine National Council [PNC] resolution in 1974, while the council will be convened for legislative elections.

[Cochlaine] Does that mean that the council will comprise PNC members living in the occupied territories?

['Arafat] Certainly.

[Cochlaine] Late last year, a delegation of 118 PLO members came to Tunis and handed you a letter, criticizing the PLO's undemocratic practices and your single-handedness. What is your comment on this?

['Arafat] The mere fact that these people were allowed to level these accusations and criticisms shows that the PLO is a democratic institution. Would they cling to democracy in any other organization? We are proud of the fact that we have established democracy within the PLO, even when our struggle was in full swing. This accomplishment is unprecedented.

[Cochlaine] Presidents Bill Clinton and Hafiz al-Asad met in Geneva on 16 January. Do you believe that Israel can conduct peace negotiations on two tracks; that is, with you and with the Syrians, at the same time?

['Arafat] Why not? Israel headed for the Madrid and Washington negotiations, fully aware that there is no alternative to a peace agreement between the Arabs and Israelis in the Middle East. The negotiations on both tracks are heading in the same direction. At any rate, the PLO's ties with Syria are good. Only 10 days ago, I took part in the funeral of Basil, President Hafiz al-Asad's eldest son, who died in a tragic incident. I also keep in mind the Arab meetings held in Washington, which will bring us closer to Arab unity.

[Cochlaine] You have recently met with King Fahd in Saudi Arabia. You have described your meeting with the Saudi monarch as cordial. Is that all there is to this meeting?

['Arafat] Our talks were cordial and constructive. I am grateful to King Fahd for the efforts he has made to achieve peace in the Middle East. I am also grateful to him for the support he is extending to the Palestinian people, the Palestine question, and Arab Jerusalem.

[Cochlaine] What role do you envisage for Switzerland as a mediator in the Middle East conflict?

['Arafat] We appreciate the constructive role being undertaken by Switzerland, which is maintaining good relations with the Palestinians and Israelis alike, with the Arabs in general, with the United States, with Russia, and with the Western European Union. Although Norway was active in the Middle East peace negotiations last year, the Swiss Confederation has always played a distinctive role in Middle East affairs.

[Cochlaine] Do you think that you can benefit from the so-called Swiss model with regard to political cooperation once federal ties are established between Jordan and the Palestinians?

['Arafat] You cannot export your unique model of coexistence among various linguistic and ethnic groups. I wish this was possible. Nonetheless, the Swiss model of coexistence will be helpful to us in the Middle East.

'Arafat Sends Message to Russian Government

NC0302071394 Paris AFP in English 0048 GMT 3 Jan 94

[Text] Tunis, Feb 3 (AFP)—Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasir 'Arafat sent a message to the Russian government Wednesday [2 February] to brief them on last weekend's peace talks with Israel in the Swiss resort of Davos, the Palestinian news agency WAFA reported.

'Arafat sent the message through Russia's ambassador to Tunis Boris Shchiborin after a meeting Wednesday at PLO headquarters here.

'Arafat is to meet Israel's chief negotiator Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres in Cairo next Monday in a bid to nail down a long overdue accord on withdrawing Israeli troops from

the Gaza Strip and Jericho, territories earmarked for Palestinian autonomy under an historic accord signed on September 13.

The troops were supposed to have started pulling out on December 13, and their withdrawal is scheduled to be complete by April 13.

'Informed Source' Discusses Davos Draft Accord

NC0302113794 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0945 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] Tunis, 3 Feb (MENA)—An informed Palestinian source has told Tunisian paper AL-SABAH today that the agreement reached in Davos between Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat and Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres includes a number of points, primarily the Israeli consent to let the Palestinian side take responsibility for receiving travelers to and from the self-rule areas.

The Palestinian source added that the agreement provides for setting up a Palestinian checkpoint that receives travelers to and from the self-rule areas. An Israeli checkpoint will exercise electronic control from a distance. Travelers wishing to enter Israel will be permitted to head for the Israeli checkpoint without being intercepted.

The source pointed out that the corridor linking Gaza and Jericho will pass through the nearby township of Idnah, Hebron, in the context of initial Israeli consent to let travelers from the self-rule areas cross into the West Bank. These travelers will be given enough time to cover the distance between the first Israeli checkpoint in the self-rule areas and the first Israeli checkpoint after these areas, and then proceed to the first Israeli military checkpoint in the destination area.

The Palestinian source affirmed that the Davos agreement included Israeli consent to put the Palestinian authority in charge of arranging all rituals during religious seasons in the al-Nabi Musa area, which Jewish pilgrims visit three times a year. In return, Christian Palestinians will make pilgrimages under their own flag to the area of al-Maghtis [where Christ was believed to have been baptized] without being harassed or intercepted by Israel.

The source added that Israel has agreed to let the national Palestinian authority extend to the Dead Sea coast and consented to the establishment of tourist resorts and economic establishments. He pointed out that the Palestinians insisted in the Davos draft of keeping control on the international borders and crossing points between Gaza and Egypt and between Jericho and Jordan. That point is still disputed.

The Palestinian source concluded that this agreement might be signed in the next stage by 'Arafat and Rabin in the presence of Egyptian President Husni Mubarak, U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Soviet Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev, and the Greek foreign minister, since Greece chairs the European Union's current session.

'Sources' Report Efforts To Build Airport in Sinai

TA0202144694 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 2 Feb 94 pp 1, 4

[By 'Abd-al-Ra'uf Arna'ut]

[Text] Jerusalem—Informed Palestinian sources have said that Palestinian-Egyptian talks were held recently on the possibility of leasing a piece of land parallel to al-'Arish region on the Egyptian borders with the Gaza Strip to the Palestinian authority slated to be set up in accordance with the self-rule agreement.

Those sources added that the Palestinians sought to lease a 40 square km area parallel to Rafah region, south of the Gaza Strip, on which to build an airport. This land extends from Rafah's boundaries to the village of Zuwayd in al-'Arish.

Palestinian experts estimate that at least 30 square km, 17 square km of which will be used as runways, are required for the construction of this airport.

The Palestinian sources, who asked to remain anonymous, said that the reason the Palestinians approached Egypt and asked to lease this land was "because of lack of space in the Gaza Strip, which is suffering from an immense population density."

Some 800,000 Palestinians live in the Gaza Strip, which is a 360 square km area, 80 square km of which have been confiscated by Israel for building settlements. According to these sources, negotiations over the Palestinian request have so far failed to yield any results.

PLO Appoints New Educational Department Head

TA0302053294 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] An informed Palestinian source in Tunis told our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem that Palestinian writer Yahya Yakhluf has been appointed director general of the PLO Educational Department, replacing 'Abdallah Hurani, who resigned from the PLO Executive Committee a few months ago.

Algeria

Radio Assesses Need for Talks, Agreements With IMF

LD0202162894 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] These Algerian-IMF talks have entered a decisive phase, which is aimed at signing an agreement on a three-year stable economic program. Our colleague Rabah Hallis wrote an analytical paper on the issue, which will be read by Mokhtar Maher:

Mr. Mourad Benachenhou, the economy minister, affirmed that Algeria's present problems center around continued inflation pressures and the increase in the unemployment level, especially among the youth, on the other.

Prevailing over these problems call for an agreement with the IMF, because the continuation of the situation as it is would lead to the collapse of the whole of the production apparatus and the dismemberment of the social body.

But the agreement with the IMF on a stable economic program does not mean that all the problems would be solved in a comprehensive manner, because the economic and social situation in Algeria is very complicated. Any violation of either of the social or economic balances could result in social and political dangers.

The statements of the different officials confirm that Algeria is attempting to sign a politically and socially acceptable agreement. The main problem lies here. How could a compromise solution, between Algeria's demands of a politically and socially acceptable agreement, on the one hand, and the contents of the programs proposed by the IMF, on the other, be reached ?

The contents of the programs that the IMF is calling for have a very high social cost, because in essence they restrain social demand and attempt to absorb the surplus, while Algeria knows a big increase in demand that is not matched by a supply which suffers from weaknesses in its structure. This means that the real average of income will noticeably fall. Would it therefore be possible to make this fall acceptable socially?

Mr. Benhamouda's recent statements reveal that the General Union of Algerian Workers [UGTA] does not any more object to the idea of devaluing the dinar if the aim was to control inflation. This stance is considered new in the UGTA's thinking. Has Benhamouda been finally convinced that the continuation of the existing situation is more dangerous to the workers than signing a stable economic agreement with the IMF the main aim of which is to control the levels of unemployment and inflation?

Judo Federation Official, Party Member Killed 2 Feb

LD0202232794 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] The Ministry of Youth and Sports and all the administrators of the national movement for youth and sports announced today with great sorrow and deep regret the assassination this morning of Mr. Yahia Bouguetaya, deputy chairman of the Algerian Judo Federation and chairman of Mascara sports club. The Ministry calls on all officials and organizers of sports events throughout the national territory to mark one minute of silence on Thursday and Friday.

The Ettahaddi party announced today that a party member was killed in Constantine. The same source added that Mr Touali Mohamed who was 32-years old was kidnapped from his home last night before he was found assassinated with a sharp weapon.

'Suspected Fundamentalists' Kill Political Activist

NC0202141394 Paris AFP in English 1334 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Algiers, Feb 2 (AFP)—Suspected Moslem fundamentalists have assassinated an activist in Algeria's Attahadi (Challenge) political party, Mohamed Touali, the party announced in a statement Wednesday.

Touali, 32, was kidnapped overnight Tuesday and his body was subsequently discovered, the party said.

He was the second member of Attahadi and the fourth political activist to be slain by suspected Islamic extremists since the January 27 murder of another official in the party, Ferhat Chibout.

The statement did not specify where Touali lived nor where the body was found. He was an employee of a state-owned company in the eastern town of Constantine.

His murder followed the killing Tuesday in the Casbah district of Algiers of French journalist Olivier Quemeneur and the wounding by gunmen of the cameraman's Australian colleague, Scott Allan White.

White was Wednesday at the Ain Nadja military hospital in a suburb of the capital, in very serious condition.

Armed Islamic groups have waged a war on the regime, targetting foreigners as part of their campaign, since the cancellation in January 1992 of a general election the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

The FIS, now outlawed, has blamed alleged government death squads for carrying out some of the killings.

Egypt

Group Warns Tourists To Leave; Retaliation Threatened

NC0202181694 Paris AFP in English 1739 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, Feb 2 (AFP)—Egypt's main Muslim militant group on Wednesday warned foreign investors and tourists to leave the country, saying its next attacks would be "extremely tough."

The al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah said in a statement sent to AFP that it would have to retaliate against the "massacre" of seven of its members late Tuesday by police in Cairo.

The statement rejected the official version that the militants died in a shoot-out, saying that they had been "killed in cold blood."

The group has targeted tourists in its campaign against President Husni Mubarak's secular government which has left almost 200 people dead in the past two years.

Minister Comments on Raid of 'Terrorist' Hideout

NC0202170694 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1410 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 2 Feb (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi announced today "that the terrorists killed in a hideout in northern Cairo's al-Zawiyah al-Hamra' neighborhood yesterday were prominent and dangerous terrorists known for their recent violent acts in Upper Egypt.

He added that the group included several suspects who had been on the run and others who had been convicted in connection with numerous terrorist cases in Upper Egypt. He said that in yesterday's incident no escapes occurred.

The interior minister explained that information was received that a group of fugitive terrorists were staying in a hideout in al- Zawiyah al-Hamra' and that after obtaining permission from the Prosecutor's Office, the hideout was stormed. He added that the terrorists opened fire on the security forces, who returned the fire. He said that a detailed statement will be issued later today naming the suspects and the details of the incident.

Al-Alfi continued that a quantity of bombs, ammunition, explosives, and weapons that the terrorists had been using in their operations were discovered in the hideout. He pointed out that the security forces found large sums of money with the seven terrorists who were killed, proving that they were hired agents paid for their acts, which he termed cowardly and vile.

The interior minister said that the police will not rest as long as one terrorist remains at large in Egypt but will pursue and arrest him.

The interior minister reaffirmed that the police have the initiative now and are conducting campaigns of arrests and surveillance against terrorists and all those linked to violent and terrorist crimes. He explained that the police are using scientific methods and careful planning that are based on full information.

Asked if Egypt has signed a security cooperation agreement with Pakistan to extradite fugitive terrorists, the interior minister said that there are agreements and contacts with various countries to exchange data and extradite criminals.

Hasan al-Alfi, who was speaking after inspecting an exhibition of stolen goods organized by the Cairo Security Directorate, concluded his remarks by saying that public security is one integral whole and that it operates concurrently on security, economic, criminal, and social levels. He explained that the police are making great efforts in all these fields based on the concept that their work is a vocation and not a mere job.

[Cairo MENA in Arabic at 1336 GMT on 2 February carries a related report about the al-Zawiyah al-Hamra' police raid, saying: "Counselor 'Abd-al-Sami' Sharaf al-Din, public attorney for the Higher State Security Department, has ordered autopsies on the bodies of seven terrorists killed yesterday to determine the cause of death. The Prosecutor's Office ordered forensic officials to inspect the site of the incident, prepare a report, and submit it to the prosecution.

["Counselor 'Abd-al-Sami' Sharaf al-Din inspected the terrorists' hideout and impounded three automatic weapons, 12 bombs, three remote control devices, large quantities of TNT, and a police radio that the terrorists had stolen from an officer at Abu Tij Police Station after killing him. Later today prosecutors will question eyewitnesses and the police officers who took part in the raid."]

3 'Terrorists' Identified

NC0202195294 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1918 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 2 Feb (MENA)—The State Security Intelligence Department has identified three of the seven terrorists who were killed when the security forces stormed their hideout in al-Zawiyah al-Hamra' in Cairo yesterday.

A statement issued by the Interior Ministry today identified the first terrorist as Yasir Zaki Abd-al-Fattah Muhammad 'Ali, a student at the Technical Trade Institute in Asyut and a resident of Dayrut. He was considered a prominent leader of the Islamic Group al-Jama'ah al-Islamiyah in Asyut. The terrorist was on the wanted list for several crimes, including the murder of 14 Christians and one Muslim, shooting at a police post in Kudiyat Mubarak, shooting at the house of Dayrut's intelligence chief, and shooting at a tourist bus and killing tourist Sharon Gill, in addition to other terrorist crimes.

The second terrorist was identified as 'Abd-al-Nabi Hasanin, born on 20 April 1974. He was a student at the Industry School in Dayrut near Asyut. He was wanted for throwing an explosive device at a pharmacy, throwing a bomb at the Jurf Sirhan police post, participating in the incidents at the Marwah movie theater in Helwan, assassinating Lieutenant Kamal Sha'lan, and assassinating assistant police officer Fikri Fadil Madi.

The third terrorist was identified as Tariq Muhammad Qurashi, born on 15 May 1970, unemployed, and a resident of al-Qurashiyah near Dayrut. He was a prominent leader of the military wing of the Islamic Group. He and his dead brother, Ahmad Qurashi, participated in the bombing of the al-Minya train as it was passing through Dayrut in 1992.

The State Intelligence Department is checking the fingerprints of the remaining dead terrorists to identify them.

The security forces seized a large quantity of weapons that were found in the terrorist hideout in al-Zawiyah al-Hamra'. They include 18 hand grenades, seven automatic weapon magazines, around 1,000 bullets of various calibers, an anti-tank projectile, an anti-personnel mine, and five detonators.

The security forces also seized two boxes of TNT, a mortar round inside a cloth bag, 12 electrical circuits, and four Taiwan-made timers. They also found a radio set belonging to the Baqur police post in Asyut; a cellular telephone; three 9-mm rifles; copper masks used to make explosive devices; one meter of fuse; 23,000 Egyptian pounds; and a number of documents, forged identity cards, and leaflets.

Libya

Liaison Secretary Meets OAU Head; Events Noted

LD0202152094 Tripoli Great Jamahiriyah Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] The secretary of the General People's Committee of Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation yesterday met Dr. Salim Ahmed Salim, the secretary-general of the OAU, in Addis Ababa. The two sides discussed the crisis between the Great Jamahiriyah and the West in light of the African position of support for the Great Jamahiriyah, and examined ways to develop this position.

The two sides also discussed a number of issues concerning the African continent. During this meeting, the OAU secretary general stressed the importance of the role played by the Great Jamahiriyah in strengthening the freedom of the African continent.

The secretary of the General People's Committee of Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation also met in Addis Ababa yesterday afternoon the Sudanese foreign minister, the heads of the Tunisian, Mauritanian, and Algerian delegations and the assistant secretary-general of the Arab League who are all attending the 59th session of the OAU's Council of Ministers. During this meeting, the so-called Lockerbie affair was discussed, in addition to the agenda of the session, some African issues and Arab-African cooperation.

General People's Congress Sends Message to Leader

LD3001174294 Tripoli JANA in English 1722 GMT 30 Jan 94

[Text] Surt, January 30, JAMAHARIYA NEWS AGENCY—The General People's Congress—the meeting of the people's congress, people's committees, syndicates, unions and professional associations—sent, at the end of the final session last night, the following message to the leader of the revolution Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi:

In the name of God, from this blessed part of the globe which sent a message of salvation to mankind and from which light shone, guiding humanity to the historic path of the masses epoch, O great leader, the convening of this session came at the climax of the popular exercise of genuine democracy with the message sent by the rallies and the human waves, volcanoes and explosions, who rallied in every Libyan Arab village village and city to the leader of the revolution, their liberator and resurrector. They also sent a strong message of warning to the forces of Western arrogance and vanity through the decision taken by the Libyan Arab people for steadfastness, defiance, and readiness for confrontation and defence for the revolutionary orientations of the Jamahiriyah without any abdication of these orientations or compromise as far as the national sovereignty and laws are concerned.

O great leader, at a time when the Arab political map is being dominated by the abandonment of the liberation orientated national civilisational project, the following current policies of reversal, the series of concessions and promotion of the defeatist slogan land for peace, but your principled, sincere and firm nationalist stance will remain the hope of all Arab masses throughout the greater Arab homeland, in adherence to the Arab national cause without any abdication. History will record proudly the dignified stand which you took enabling us, we the generation of Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, to stand tall like the palm trees of our country who strength is well entrenched in the soil and the branches freely extending towards the sky.

Certainly the Great Jamahiriyah will remain under your leadership, the heaven on earth in which no one who betrays it would live and its people will remain the freest and kindest of all peoples.

Allah endowed us with you as a steadfast and sincere leader accustomed to advocating justice, and repulsing falsehood. So let us go forward under your leadership and we are with you on the path of revolution and defiance.

Rely on Allah and you will always remain the conscience of the nation and the teacher of generations to come.

Allah willing we rely on you and we will be victorious. Forward and [words indistinct] revolutionary the struggle will continue.

Signed: the General People's Congress

JANA Chides France for Actions in Algeria

LD0202160594 Tripoli JANA in English 1439 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Tripoli, al-Nowar [February] 2, JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY— The assistant official spokeswoman for the French Foreign Ministry Catherine Colonna said that France hopes that the new Algerian president, Liamine Zeroual, will carry out a genuine political dialogue with all Algerian parties. This will serve to place Algeria on the road to democracy and national reconciliation.

The JAMAHIRIYAH NEWS AGENCY's Arab affairs editor commented on this saying:

These official French statements constitute a blatant interference in the internal affairs of friendly Algeria. At the same time, France has acted in a silly manner towards Algeria. The editor added that if France had, for example, called for building cordial relations with Algeria then this would be reasonable. However, for officials to meddle in an internal matter which concerns Algeria, as was the case with the statements made by the French spokeswoman, then the matter is both silly and constitutes a blatant interference in Algeria's internal affairs.

The editor said that if no one could be found to say this then the Great Jamahiriyah will say it [word indistinct] in a loud voice, for France continues to see itself as a colonial power and as if it is its mentor. It is as if Algeria belongs to France and Algeria sacrificed one million and a half martyrs in the battles for independence and freedom against French colonialism.

Such interference, propelled by a colonialist bias, can only serve to increase the anger we feel against France, its 'colonial master' mentality, and the spirit of a colonialist country.

Morocco

Fes University Closed After Islamists, Leftists Clash

LD0202131694 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Fes University was closed today following yesterday's confrontations between Moroccan Islamist students and leftists. The security forces surrounded Fes University and studies were suspended indefinitely.

Similar student confrontations took place in Morocco last October, killing one and seriously injuring 10.

Officials Deliver Message From King to Egypt's Mubarak

LD0102135794 Rabat MAP in English 1234 GMT 1 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, Feb 1 (MAP)—Egyptian President Husni Mubarak Monday received a verbal message from King Hassan II.

The message was conveyed by Mohamed Aouad, adviser to the Moroccan king, who was accompanied by Moroccan Culture Minister Mohamed Allal Si Nasser.

Si Nasser at the end of the meeting told the press the Egyptian president voiced feelings of fraternity towards the Moroccan sovereign with whom he shares identical views on issues concerning the Arab world.

Talks covered the broadlines of the ongoing conference on Moroccan-Egyptian relations, Si Nasser said adding that President Mubarak who surveyed the development of the Middle East peace talks explained that problems accumulated for decades cannot be resolved in one or two phases of negotiations.

Aouad and Si Nasser arrived here Sunday to partake in the conference on Moroccan-Egyptian relations.

King Hassan Congratulates New Algerian President

LD0102174894 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 1 Feb 94

[Text] His Majesty King Hassan II, may God grant him victory, has sent the following message of congratulations to His Excellency Liamine Zeroual, president of the Republic of Algeria:

On the occasion of your taking over the presidency of the sister Republic of Algeria, we are happy to convey to Your Excellency our congratulations and wishes for success in your duty. On the same occasion, we wish the fraternal people of Algeria further progress, prosperity, and peace.

We wish you good health and hope you will kindly accept our highest consideration and fraternal esteem.

[Signed] Your brother Hassan II, king of Morocco.

Sudan

BBC Interviews Leader of SPLA-United Faction

AB0202214594 London BBC World Service in English 1705 GMT 2 Feb 94

[From the "Focus on Africa" program]

[Text] With much talk of new fighting and another government offensive in southern Sudan, the question is: Will the divisions in the rebel SPLA [Sudanese People's Liberation Army] give the government an easy time? The two rebel sides, John Garang's wing and Riak Machar's breakaway faction, SPLA-United, keep having talks only to go back to the bush and start fighting each other again. They had another go at burying the hatchet in Nairobi in early January. Well, Riak Machar is currently in London and Robin White asked him what the state of relations was now.

[Begin recording] [Machar] I think that relations are improving.

[White] Has there been any fighting at all since that meeting in early January?

[Machar] Not that reported to me, no.

[White] So, what happens next?

[Machar] Well, we are hoping to have another meeting to work out our relationship in terms of how we could cooperate at the frontline.

[White] And when would that meeting be?

[Machar] I hope it will take place on 7 [February] if that it is going to be made possible by the Kenyans.

[White] That is this weekend?

[Machar] Yes.

[White] And you will meet face to face with John Garang?

[Machar] Yes, we have been meeting face to face.

[White] How do you get on when you meet each other?

[Machar] We talk.

[White] Do you argue?

[Machar] Naturally, we had differences and we had to argue them out, yes.

[White] What are still the differences between you?

[Machar] The first difference, which we have now overcome, is the objective of the movement. Garang has accepted the right of self-determination for the people of south Sudan. The other outstanding issues are the issues on democracy and issues on human rights.

[White] That was one of the initial reasons for you breaking away and that you accused him of human rights abuses and of being dictatorial. In fact, since then he has released a lot of people from jail, so has he done most of what you asked him or not?

[Machar] Well, he has released most of the people and many others escaped and there are still others in jail. The three Martins—Martin Makul, Martin Majir, Martin Quigbera—and Kawaye Makwaye are still in jail.

[White] Where are they being held?

[Machar] I don't know.

[White] The objection that Garang seems to be having against you of late is that he claims that you are not doing any fighting against the Sudanese Army—the Northern Sudanese Army—you are too busy fighting him. Is that true? Do you accept that?

[Machar] He may be too busy fighting me, not the other way round. I don't think that we are not fighting the Sudan Government. First, look at the strategy of the Sudan Government. The strategy of the Sudan Government today is to take control of the borders, and the borders which they think are viable to the SPLA are Uganda and Kenya, and the person who is at those borders is John Garang forces. [as heard]

[White] Garang seems to think that you have some secret deal with the Sudanese Government in which the Sudanese Government will not attack you.

[Machar] Well, I don't think there is any secret deal between SPLA-United and the Sudan Government. If there is one let him produce it.

[White] The signs are that there is a major offensive on the way from the Khartoum Government, can you withstand this?

[Machar] Well, there is a major offensive. It will be the 12th major offensive since we started the war in 1983 and we withstood the previous ones. I think, yes, we will withstand this also.

[White] But might you not this time lose? Isn't the enemy—your enemy—getting stronger?

[Machar] By the way, even if the enemy takes over all the towns which are under the SPLAs'—both SPLA—that is not the end of the war. We will quickly revert to guerrilla tactics.

[White] Do you think the people of southern Sudan can stand much more?

[Machar] They have been fighting nearly now for 40 years. It is because they believe in the cause of the struggle. Yes, it is true that there is a desperate humanitarian situation. But they are not giving up the fight now.

[White] But are you quite sure that the people regard your soldiers as friends?

[Machar] Our soldiers come from the people. They are children of South Sudan. They have fathers, they have mothers, they have families who are South Sudanese, so they are friends of people of South Sudan.

[White] They are not the bringers of death and destruction?

[Machar] Not at all because if they were regarded as such then the civil population would not contribute their children to go and fight this war.

[White] Won't you accept that things have never sank so low, things were never so bad as now in the southern Sudan?

[Machar] Every liberation movement has its ups and downs. [end recording]

Well, it seems the government offensive in southern Sudan is, in fact, well underway, according to reports from neighboring Uganda. From Kampala, our correspondent Eppajar Ojulu telexed this report. [read by announcer]

According to travelers arriving from the northwestern Arua region, the offensive started during the middle of last week. The travelers included businessmen who usually frequent the Uganda-Sudan border and they told me that during the past two days, loud explosions coming from inside Sudan have been heard from Uganda's side of the border. They said the explosions sounded like long-range heavy artillery pounding suspected rebel positions. I have been informed by usually reliable sources that Colonel John Garang's SPLA faction was the main target of the dry season offensive, which is concentrating on the rebel-occupied areas in the Eastern Equatoria and Western Equatoria Provinces.

The sources said that thousands of troops supported by artillery were advancing southwards towards the Uganda border on one front and the Kenyan border on the other. The objective of the offensive is to cut off Garang's forces from their main supply routes suspected to be in Uganda and Kenya. The offensive has become the subject of discussion among the people in Arua, who are yet again beginning to see a new influx of refugees. One businessman, who claims he sometimes goes deep inside the

rebel-controlled area, said that the shelling was being done randomly by the government troops. He claimed that three days ago, one of the shells had landed on a church and smashed it.

Foreign Minister Discusses Southern Issues

EA0202201994 Omdurman National Unity Radio in Arabic 1315 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Husayn Sulayman Abu-Salih has again expressed Sudan's keenness and desire for the efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development [IGADD] states initiative to produce the expected results in achieving peace. This was stated during separate meetings with the foreign ministers of Kenya and Uganda on the sidelines of the meetings of the ministerial council of the OAU in Addis Ababa.

Dr. Abu-Salih explained that during his meetings with the two ministers, he declared Sudan's interest in working to speed up steps to reach a comprehensive and acceptable solution that guarantees complete stability in the country. He said such a solution should end the dispute and its consequences. He added that the two ministers expressed their understanding of the Sudanese Government's stand and its seriousness in striving to find a peaceful solution to the dispute in the south. They also expressed their appreciation for the praise for the efforts of the IGADD states in this respect.

Country's Nationality, Citizenship Law Examined

NC0202133694 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 31 Jan 94 pp 16, 17

[All Sudanese placenames as published]

[Text] Some Arab and Western capitals are following with great interest the trend within the Sudanese Government to grant Sudanese citizenship to any Muslim, since this is considered a first of its kind by a government since the naturalization law was created.

Diplomatic sources in Cairo noted that the Khartoum government intends to pass a new draft law on naturalization. This law stipulates granting Sudanese citizenship to every Muslim this coming month. The sources added that if this happens, large numbers of extremist terrorists will find shelter and a land to use as a springboard for their terrorist activities.

It is worth noting here that the current naturalization law stipulates that the applicant for citizenship must have resided in Sudan for not less than 12 years and should not have a criminal record of a crime that violates security and honor.

These diplomatic sources noted that there are more than 5,000 men and women extremist Muslims residing in Sudan. Most of them are from Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and Palestine. The number of Islamists from Morocco known to these sources is 50. There are over 370 Egyptians known by their "code" [preceding word in English] names. There are also over 300 Tunisians who belong to the Ennahda Movement headed by Rachid Ghanouchi.

These sources noted that among these groups, there are some Syrians, Iraqis, and Yemenis who live in Sudan under the cover of being businessmen and contractors. Most of these Islamists live in the areas of al-Riyad, al-Ta'if, al-Manshiyah, Kawbar, and Madinat al-Mughtaribin in Madinat al-Khartoum Bahri.

Oman

Officials Urge Promotion of Various Ties With Iran

LD0202151394 Tehran IRNA in English 1256 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Muscat, Feb. 2, IRNA—Ranking Omani officials Tuesday [1 February] called for promotion of bilateral economic and commercial ties with Iran and stressed that Muscat attached great importance to its ties with Iran.

Governor general of Fars Province, in south of Iran, Mohammad 'Ali Naqi Jahromi who is currently here to open the first exhibition of products of the province, yesterday met and conferred with two Omani ministers.

Underlining the need for further expansion of mutual ties, the Omani national heritage and culture minister, Faysal Bin-'Ali Al Sa'id, described Iran as a great Islamic country.

Speaking to IRNA, he voiced his country's readiness to remove any obstacle on the way of bilateral economic and commercial ties.

Another Omani official, Commerce and Industry Minister Makbul Bin-'Ali Bin-Sultan [name and title as received] also called for joint venture and exchange of political and economic delegations between the two countries.

Bin-Sultan who is also head of Iran-Oman joint economic and commercial commission, termed as good diplomatic relations between Tehran and Oman.

Jahromi stressed that foreign countries and enemies of Islam were attempting to sow discord among Islamic countries in order to seize the markets in those countries with their own products.

The first exhibition of Fars Province opened here Wednesday with the participation of over 80 provincial industrial and producing companies in a 4,000 square meter roofed area.

Yemen

Vice President Notes Egyptian Role, Views Accord

NC0302095494 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0600 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] Cairo, 3 Feb (MENA)—'Ali Salim al-Bid, Yemeni vice president and secretary general of the Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP], has welcomed a decisive and responsible Egyptian role in resolving the crushing crisis in his country. He praised Egypt for the immense sacrifices and assistance it offered for the revolution in Yemen and for its constant support for current Yemeni issues.

Interviewed by AL-AHRAM at his residence in Aden, al-Bid stressed that Yemen cannot accept being a country of domestic or international terrorism that may harm the Egyptian people.

He said if the Arab countries fail to join forces, they will find themselves in a difficult situation.

Al-Bid said that the current crisis in Yemen has put to a real test his country's ability to establish a state of institutions and stability despite the stimuli of confrontation.

He noted that there has been no clear, unified vision toward the unified state. The adversary forces, he added, did not give the YSP enough time; the party was pushed to a difficult position through assassination of its leading figures and statesmen, and even desecration of houses. He noted the party's sacrifices to establish a state that will take Yemen to the 21st century, not return it to the 19th century.

Al-Bid considered the recently concluded Pledge and Accord document as merely a step toward rectifying the course of unity.

He stressed that the crisis between him and Yemeni President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih is not personal, but one among all ruling organizations and bodies involved in the current dialogue.

UN Special Commission Talks Begin in Baghdad

Ekeus Optimistic About Progress

JN0202122994 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1145 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] In a news conference on arrival at his place of residence at the al-Rashid Hotel in Baghdad, Rolf Ekeus voiced optimism about arriving at a situation which would enable the committee to submit its report to the UN Security Council for consideration of the oil embargo against Iraq.

He said that his optimism is based on the developments that took place between the two sides in November 1993 when Iraq approved Resolution 715.

He said: My feeling is that we have started well and that progress has been made. He said that his talks with Iraqi officials will deal with political and technical issues, including the application of long-term monitoring, which is related to Resolution 715.

He said: For our part, we will explain the situation at the UN Security Council as well as the prospects for development and progress. Our hope is to make progress as soon as possible so that the committee would be able to submit its report to the UN Security Council and so that it would be able to affirm that Iraq has honored its obligations. Thus, we can do something to pressure the UN Security Council to take the necessary measures to lift the oil embargo against Iraq.

He explained that his visit to Iraq is part of the dialogue that started in July 1993 and to maintain the momentum of the positive developments that have been realized.

In response to a question on the duration of his visit to Baghdad, Ekeus said: This depends on the talks that we will hold with the Iraqi side.

He said: The talks will certainly cover the issue of lifting the embargo against Iraq, but I cannot make any comments because the process is continuing and we hope that it will become more extensive.

The delegation includes John Scott, the committee's legal adviser; Tim Terevan [name as received], the committee spokesman; and Maurizio Zifferero, deputy chairman of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

The first session of talks will begin at the Foreign Ministry at 2000 today.

Delegations Open Official Talks

JN0202192094 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1855 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, 2 Feb (INA)—Official talks between Iraq and the UN Special Commission began here this evening.

The Iraqi delegation to the talks is led by Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf. The Special Commission's delegation is led by its chairman, Rolf Ekeus.

On the Iraqi side are Lieutenant General 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, director of the Military Industrialization Organization; Dr. Riyad al-Qaysi, Foreign Ministry under secretary; and a number of officials. On the Special Commission's delegation are Maurizio Zifferero, deputy chairman of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Tim Terevan [name as received], the committee spokesman; and John Scott, the committee's legal adviser.

Ekeus and the accompanying delegation arrived in Baghdad at noon today on a visit of several days to Iraq.

Second Round of Talks Held 3 Feb

JN0302095694 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0915 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, 3 Feb (INA)—Iraq and the UN Special Commission held a second round of talks at the Foreign Ministry this morning.

The Iraqi side to the talks was led by Foreign Minister Muhammad Sa'id al-Sahhaf. Rolf Ekeus, chairman of the UN Special Commission, led the Commission's side to the talks.

The Iraqi side comprised Lieutenant General 'Amir Muhammad Rashid, director of the Military Industrialization Organization; Dr. Riyad al-Qaysi, Foreign Ministry under secretary; and several Foreign Ministry officials. The Special Commission's side comprised Zifferero, deputy chairman of the International Atomic Energy Agency, John Scott, the Commission's legal adviser; and Tim Terevan [name as received], official spokesman for the Commission.

Ekeus Comments on Second Round Talks

JN0302111994 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1047 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, 3 Feb (INA)—A second round of talks lasting two and half hours between Iraq and the UN Special Commission held at the Foreign Ministry was concluded at noon today.

In a statement to the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY after this round of talks, Rolf Ekeus said: "We are continuing our talks on future steps. I cannot elaborate any further on the issue, since the talks are continuing. We are holding working sessions."

Ekeus spoke to reporters on his arrival at the al-Rashid Hotel, where he is staying, expressing hope that progress will be made. He added: I am convinced that we will make progress. We will continue our discussions tomorrow. It is premature to provide details about the talks.

The first round of talks between Iraq and the Special Commission was held here last night.

Paper Says Security Council Must Move on Sanctions

JN0202151894 Baghdad INA in English 1307 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, Feb 2, INA—AL-THAWRAH newspaper of Baghdad today said the reciprocal obligations of both Iraq and the Security Council dictate the immediate shifting to the implementation of article 22 of the council Resolution No. 687 providing for lifting the embargo and allowing Iraq to ensure its medicine and food needs.

A paper article here today said that any fair observer would feel astonished over any attempt to move around this reality with the object of procrastination in lifting the embargo or employing the sufferings of Iraqi people in cheap compromise and blackmail leading to materializing rejected political purposes that go contrary to the Iraqis' right in acquiring independent well. [sentence as received]

The Iraqi paper referring to statements by some on the necessity of building confidence and the suspicious calls to delay the lifting of the sanctions until the conditions of this confidence were established, said that such statements and calls fall within manoeuvres of the United States aimed at involving others into such designs and preventing them from viewing right and maintain them within the aggressive American objectives that contradict legitimacy and the principles of right and justice.

AL-THAWRAH said that confidence building between Iraq, the Security Council and the U.N. Special Committee for the sake of ending the injustice sustained by the Iraqi people could be reached through an understanding and an objective and fair outlook away from all evil purposes and motives.

The paper pointed out that that needs from all concerned parties recognizing that Iraq had done all what it could to realize its obligations and pledges.

The Iraqi paper further said that confidence building could not be established through manoeuvering or attempts to jump over realities or neglecting the sufferings of the Iraqi children, women and elderly. This could not also be achieved in lagging behind this international party or that who had accepted to become false witness in one of unprecedented humanitarian and ethical scandals in modern history.

AL-THAWRAH concluded by saying that the United States and its satellites do not want to see realities or to have the embargo imposed on Iraq ending and therefore, the Security Council is required to take the initiative of implementing its obligations and putting an end to this flagrant breaching of all legal, just and humanitarian principles.

Paper: Clinton Misled Congress on Sanctions Issue

JN0202152994 Baghdad INA in English 1355 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, Feb 2, INA—AL-JUMHURIYAH daily of Baghdad has said that the report of U.S President Bill Clinton to the Congress is rife with lies and pre-fabricated tales with the aim of keeping the blockade imposed on Iraq.

A paper article affirmed that President Clinton had misled the supreme legislative authority and pushed it to back up an inhumane and unjust policy, entirely intercepting values and principles included in the U.S Constitution. This behaviour simply contradicts the oath of presidency in which Clinton vowed to perform his duties sincerely, the paper said. It added that President Clinton had perpetrated the crime of insistence on killing thousands of Iraqis through maintaining the blockade for longer time.

If the Congress is loyal and sincere to the American Constitution and its well-known duties, it should underline Clinton's premeditation on lie and misleading the American public opinion and the Congress and committing the crime of the human race annihilation, the paper confirmed. It stressed that Clinton's lies were another evidence of his political and moral failure and bankruptcy and his weakness and reluctance.

Saddam Orders Cash Awards for Car Thieves' Capture

JN0202191094 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 30 Jan 94 p1

[By Latif al-Tayyib]

[Text] Baghdad—Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, has ordered a 30,000-dinar award for whoever captures a car thief. A responsible source at the Interior Ministry told AL-JUMHURIYAH that the president's order covers citizens, party organizations, and Internal Security Forces personnel who capture car thieves. The source urged police departments and party organizations to submit the names of those entitled to the award to the Presidential Council after the crime of car theft is legally proved. He stressed that this noble gesture will effectively contribute toward curbing the phenomenon of car theft. He said the award provides an incentive for the Internal Security Forces personnel to do everything possible to remove this phenomenon.

Escort Said Dead After Alleged Attempt on Saddam

PM0202134294 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 1 Feb 94 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Iraqi Opposition Talks of Attempt To Kill Saddam"]

[Text] Amman, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Iraqis arriving in Amman from Baghdad the night before last have claimed that one of President Saddam Husayn's escorts

tried to open fire on the president but the other escorts killed the escort with a hail of machinegun bullets.

The Iraqis said that the dead escort, who held the rank of captain, came from Tikrit, Saddam's birthplace.

The Iraqi president (last summer) himself shot and killed his escort Mu'ayyad al-'Ayyash because he had informed an Iraqi family of a secret place in southern Baghdad in which Saddam was present. Al-'Ayyash, too, came from Tikrit and had family ties with the president.

The Iraqis who spoke about the new attempt believe that it occurred less than a month ago just outside Baghdad and that a quick reshuffle was made immediately in the protection teams assigned to guard the Iraqi president.

The most recent report leaked from Baghdad spoke about the blowing up of an agricultural tractor on a road through which the Iraqi president's motorcade passed on its way to one of his bunkers outside the capital. At the time suspicion revolved around the president's escorts and senior leaders, who were the only ones who had known that the president's motorcade would use this country road.

Ramadan Addresses 'Combatants,' Urges Vigilance

JN0202130994 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] On behalf of comrade leader Saddam Husayn, comrade Taha Yasin Ramadan, member of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party National Command, has decorated several comrade combatants affiliated with the security units [himayat] with High Orders of Merit in appreciation for their commendable roles in the great historic showdown of the eternal Mother of Battles.

A ceremony was held on the occasion. It began with Koranic recitations, and then the Opening Chapter of the Koran was read to invoke God's mercy on the souls of the noblest of all creatures, the martyrs of Iraq and the glorious Arab nation.

Comrade Taha Yasin Ramadan then delivered a speech. He began by conveying the greetings of comrade leader Saddam Husayn to those who received the medals. He also conveyed his excellency's wishes of continued pride and victory. He added: This honoring ceremony crowns the enormous struggle, high discipline, and true commitment displayed in your performance of holy missions and tasks.

Ramadan affirmed that the current phase requires further preparedness, continuous training, and constant vigilance, because the Mother of Battles is still going on, and also because the enemies are using all their cards to undermine the willpower and steadfastness of the noble Iraqis, who thwarted the most massive aggression and defeated the most fercious embargo enforced by all forces of evil and aggression.

Ramadan noted that defending great Iraq by all means is a holy duty to be performed by all honorable Iraqis. He asserted that the reconstruction drive is a chapter in the counteroffensive against the aggressors meant to break the unfair embargo imposed on Iraq by the enemies of Arabism and mankind in defiance of all heavenly and earthly laws and in violation of human rights.

The medal-awarding ceremony was attended by several comrade members of the National Command and the head of the National Command General Secretariat Office.

Minister Inaugurates Refrigeration Compressor Plant

JN0202204594 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Staff General Husayn Kamil Hasan, minister of industry and minerals and supervisor of the Military Industrialization Organization [MIO], today inaugurated a plant for the production of compressors at the State Enterprise for Electrical Industries. The plant has an annual production capacity of 500,000 compressors.

As he toured the plant's sections, the minister was acquainted with the progress of the production operations. He gave instructions for increasing production to serve the manufacturing of locally-made freezers and refrigerators, of which compressors constitute a basic part.

Staff Gen. Husayn Kamil Hasan also inaugurated a comprehensive irrigation pumps fair at the State Enterprise for Mechanical Industries. During a conversation with workers at the enterprise, the minister said that the zealous personnel of the Ministry of Industry and Minerals, with the effective support of the MIO formations, are presenting this accomplishment as a gift to the leader of the march, leader President Saddam Husayn. He said that after the country's need for chemical and phosphatic fertilizers has been fully met in the service of the agricultural sector, this distinguished effort constitutes a new technological link in defiance of the circumstances of the unjust blockade.

An Iraqi News Agency correspondent said that the State Enterprise for Mechanical Industries has put into action its productive plan for this year. This plan aims at producing and manufacturing thousands of pumps of various sizes through 100 percent Iraqi designs, molds, and technological methods.

Bank To Begin Foreign Currency Transactions

JN0202173994 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1702 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Baghdad, 2 Feb (INA)—The al-Rafidayn Bank in Baghdad has announced it will open special sections to sell and purchase foreign currency in accordance with market rates specified on a daily basis.

An authorized source at the bank told the IRAQI NEWS AGENCY that the Central Bank has authorized four branches of the al-Rafidayn Bank in Baghdad and its branches in the al-Basrah and Ninawa Governorates to sell and purchase foreign currency as of 5 February.

Rabin: No Accord Implementation Before Written Agreement

TA0202161594 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said today that Israel will not start implementing the Gaza-Jericho agreement before a written, mutually-acceptable, and detailed agreement has been attained. The prime minister added that only a miracle will enable the completion of the negotiations next week, and that some of the issues discussed in Davos remain open. The Palestinians have not reported to the economic talks in Paris for two weeks, Rabin stated, and the negotiations on the transfer of civil powers are stuck. Our political correspondent Shlomo Raz points out that the prime minister made these remarks after the signing ceremony of scientific agreements with Austria.

[Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew at 1400 GMT on 2 February adds: "Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin stated today that PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat's goal is to establish a Palestinian state in the first stage, and a confederation with Jordan at a later stage." In a recorded passage in English, Rabin says: "To the best of my knowledge, the goal is a Palestinian state; perhaps after that a confederation. But, this is not my problem."]

[Referring to the reported criticism of security officials at the understandings reached in Davos by Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres and 'Arafat, Rabin said "he did not want to get into abstract and fabricated arguments."]

Rabin on Agreement, 'Justification' of Settlements

TA0202194694 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Speech by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin to a visiting U.S. delegation of the Hadassah women's movement "this evening;" place not given—recorded in English with Arabic subtitles]

[Text] We made our decision, we signed the DOP [Declaration of Principles]. We are in a process of negotiations with the PLO, the Palestinians, about the Gaza-Jericho First; first phase, to put it into a test, to see what can be done.

But, in this agreement, we achieved the following:

One, during the period of the interim arrangements, Jerusalem remains united. We did not succeed to achieve it in Camp David. [applause]

Second, to remain in all the settlements. And, believe me, to my humble opinion, many of them have no justification whatsoever. They don't contribute whatsoever to Israel's security. Not all of them, a considerable number of them. Today, the way that they were established creates a problem to the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and the security forces to protect the lives of the settlers, because they were not settled in a way to protect the life of those who live there. Gush Qatif, yes; many others, no.

I believe that in 1994 we'll see a year in which decisions—and major decisions—will have to be made. It's a year which I believe will serve as a crossroads in which direction developments in the Middle East, especially in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict, will go: towards peace or towards stalemate, and whatever stalemates have created in the past in the region.

Rabin Meets Austria's Busek; Accord Signed

AU0302103494 Vienna WIENER ZEITUNG in German 3 Feb 94 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Busek Inaugurates Professorship"]

[Text] Jerusalem—On Wednesday [2 February], during his visit to Israel, Vice Chancellor Erhard Busek met with Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin for a talk and for the signing of a scientific-technological cooperation agreement.

As Vice Chancellor Busek stressed, during the meeting Rabin pointed out the "international responsibility for peace in the Middle East." The international community, which has called for peace for years, must now also participate in the reconstruction of the Palestinian territories.

In the afternoon Busek inaugurated the "Franz-Cardinal-Koenig Professorship for Austrian Studies" at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Previously Busek was the first Austrian politician to lay a wreath at the grave of Theodor Herzl, the father of political Zionism, and visited the Yad Vashem memorial for the 6 million victims of the Holocaust.

Beilin: Tourists Can Visit Egypt Despite Threats

TA0302115894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Yosi Beilin says Israel is counting on Egyptian authorities to deal with violence by militants in that country, and that Jerusalem is not recommending that Israelis stay out of Egypt. Egyptian militants have warned foreigners to leave the country for their own safety, saying the next attacks will be extremely ferocious and strong. Deputy Foreign Minister Beilin gave the Israeli assessment to reporter Jack Katzenell:

[Begin recording] [Beilin] Well, we are of course following the situation, but we are sure that the Egyptian Government is able to handle this situation and to take care of those developments which are, of course, not very positive, but still are far from representing the general mood in Egypt.

[Katzenell] Do you think that Israelis can still visit Egypt, or should still visit Egypt as tourists?

[Beilin] We are not calling on Israelis not to visit Egypt. [end recording]

Three Tzomet MKs Quit, Set Up New Party

TA0202160994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1500 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Three Knesset members [MK's]—Gonen Segev, Ester Salmovitz, and Alex Goldfarb—are seceding from Tzomet and setting up a new faction named YA'AD [Independent and Democratic Israel]. Our party affairs correspondent Shmu'el Tal reports that the three have announced, however, that Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan can acquiesce to their request to suspend the party director general and appoint an external auditor to probe party affairs by 7 February, when the Knesset House Committee is expected to approve their petition to be recognized as an independent faction. If he does, they will withdraw their secession. They contend that one-third of the Tzomet Secretariat will join their move.

Eytan's reaction: Segev is gone and good riddance. Now we will be able to run the party without intrigue. Eytan will convene a news conference in a short while.

The three stated that they have not negotiated with anyone and that they are busy organizing their new movement. Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that their faction will qualify to receive party funding in the sum of 2 million shekels a year. If they join the coalition, they will be eligible for ministerial and deputy ministerial posts in accordance with the current coalition key.

The three seceding MK's today held contacts with Labor MK's; it was decided to wait four to six weeks before launching negotiations on their joining the coalition.

More political reactions: Coalition Chairman Eli Dayan said this was an internal affair concerning Tzomet alone, and if the three endorse the government guidelines, nothing will prevent their joining the coalition. Ran Kohen, chairman of the Meretz faction, also called on the three to accept the government guidelines and to fight for their missions from within the government.

Arye Der'i, the SHAS [Torah Observing Sephardim] chairman, said SHAS will not rush to join the coalition if the three Tzomet MK's join it. SHAS will return to the coalition only if the government is founded on a majority of Jewish MK's, or if the implementation of the agreement with the Palestinians is guaranteed not to harm the settlers in the territories.

Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu said he will not intervene in the internal affairs of other parties, but he regrets any rift in the right-wing parties.

Rabin, Tzomet Leader React

TA0202193994 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1800 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Tzomet leader Refa'el Eytan says he has given the party's internal ombudsman the go-ahead to use outside advisers to help investigate claims of financial irregularities and mismanagement of party affairs. Speaking at a press conference, Eytan described Gonen Segev, Ester Salmovitz, and Alex Goldfarb's breakaway as an attempt to strengthen their positions in the upcoming elections. Eytan said he was not surprised by reports of their possible plans to join the coalition.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin says the Labor party must not get involved in the internal political problems of the Tzomet party. Speaking to reporters tonight in Jerusalem, Rabin refused to say whether he would attempt to entice the three resigning members to join the coalition and, in his words, would not answer hypothetical questions.

[Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew at 1800 GMT on 2 February adds that Rabin "stated a short time ago that he had not authorized anybody to negotiate with the three seceding members of Tzomet."]

IDF Policy on Settlers' Demonstrations Reported

TA0302053594 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Excerpts] The settlers' operation aimed at doubling the number of existing settlements continued this evening. Dozens of settlers set up a new outpost near the settlement of Yaqir on the trans-Samaria highway. [Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 2 February reports that "the 50 settlers from Yaqir who attempted to set up a new settlement on a hill next to their settlement left the site after the Army declared the area a closed military zone. Our correspondent Dani Gur-Arye reports that no confrontation occurred between the soldiers and the settlers."]

IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officers said that the operation impedes the routine activities of the IDF, which is compelled to assign a large number of troops to evacuate the settlers. The organizers of the operation, called This Is Our Land, say that the operation will continue in all 130 settlements, or until 50,000 people are arrested. As is known, the leaders of the Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza object to the operation, but have nevertheless announced they will provide legal assistance to settlers who are arrested. [passage omitted]

The struggle between the official leadership of the settlers and activists in the field in fact exists only on paper. This week, an attempt will be made to close ranks in anticipation of the deployment of Israel Police in the territories in place of the IDF. [passage omitted]

The IDF announced today that demonstrations by Jews in the territories will henceforth be allowed only within the Jewish settlements, just as demonstrations by Arabs will be allowed only within Arab locations. Our legal affairs correspondent Shlomo Arad reports that the High Court of Justice today rejected the settlers' request to demonstrate in the synagogue in Jericho based on this policy, arguing that the synagogue is located in an Arab location and that the court was convinced that such a move could imperil security on the site.

Settlers' Attempt To Squat in Arab Homes Thwarted

TA0202071894 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] In Samaria, security forces last night thwarted an attempt by Kfar Tapuah settlers to squat in Arab homes in the nearby village of Kafr Yusuf, as part of the shadow settlements group of the This Is Our Land operation. The area was declared a closed military zone and settlers were requested to leave. Eleven settlers who refused were taken into custody. A spokesman for the This Is Our Land condemned the actions of the Kfar Tapuah settlers and said his group's aim was to settle on state land, not to take over private Arab homes.

The committee of Jordan Valley settlements is planning to establish a special patrol unit to be known as the Jordan Valley Watch. It will carry out regular patrols in the Jordan Valley, including the territorial corridors due under the proposed autonomy accord to link Jericho to nearby Muslim and Christian holy sites and to the northern Dead Sea area. The spokesman for the committee told Qol Yisra'el that the patrols have a deterrent purpose and are aimed also to demonstrate an Israeli presence on the Jordan Valley roads.

Request To Lift Loan Restrictions Possible

TA0202122394 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 2 Feb 94 p A1

[Report by Judy Maltz]

[Excerpts] Israel might ask the U.S. Administration to lift some of the restrictions imposed on the use of the loan guarantees because they make it difficult for Jerusalem to use the funds. Jerusalem is considering asking the Americans to increase the amount that can be included in the state budget to be used for investments in infrastructure and to fund the internal debt.

Within the framework of the loan guarantees agreement, Israel can use only $600 million annually for those purposes—less than one third of the annual quota. The Americans imposed restrictions on the use of the loan guarantees in order to make sure that they are not invested in the territories and do not fund current expenditures and a rise in the standard of living. [passage omitted]

The request to change the clauses in the agreement will most likely be raised in the next session of the Israeli-U.S. Joint Economic Development Group (JEDG) in Washington in March. Sources in the Treasury said that U.S. officials are aware of the problem created by the restrictions imposed on the use of the funds and even support amending the agreement. [passage omitted]

Another option being considered is to ask the Americans to be able to use some of the loan guarantees to convert short-term foreign debts with long-term debts thereby improving Israel's foreign debt situation. [passage omitted]

Three Israelis Wounded by Shots From Passing Car

TA0202131094 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Excerpt] Three Israelis were wounded by terrorist gunfire in Halhul a short while ago. One of them is in critical condition and the other two in moderate condition. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that as a Subaru passed the three men's car at the entrance to Halhul from the direction of Hebron, some 20 bullets were fired from it. A leaflet signed by the 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam squad was found on the site. The Subaru was later found abandoned in Hebron. The security forces have imposed a curfew on the area. [passage omitted]

Girl Seriously Wounded by Soldiers in Gaza Strip

TA0202210294 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Our correspondent Sulayman al-Shafa'i reports that in graffiti sprayed in the Jabalyah refugee camp in the Gaza Strip today, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine assumed responsibility for the murder of taxi driver Elias Kohen in Beersheba earlier this week.

In the Gaza Strip today, an 11-year-old girl was seriously wounded in the head by a bullet fired by Israeli soldiers.

Eight Palestinians suspected of collaborating with Israel have been murdered in the Gaza Strip in the last two days.

Iranian Diplomats Ordered To Leave Country

NC0302110494 Paris AFP in English 1017 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] Amman, Feb 3 (AFP)—Jordan has ordered 21 of the 26 Iranian diplomats based here to leave by the end of the month, the foreign ministry said Thursday [3 February].

Jordanian political sources said the government ordered out the Iranians because of their contacts with Islamic fundamentalists.

The ministry informed the Iranian authorities about the move at the beginning of January, giving the diplomats two months to leave.

The official reason was that Jordan wanted to reach a balance between the number of diplomats in each country, as Jordan had only two in Tehran.

Jordan and Iran resumed diplomatic relations in January 1991 after a 10-year break.

Tehran severed relations with Amman because of its support for Baghdad during the Iran-Iraq war from 1980-1988.

The Iranian embassy in Amman reopened in March 1991 and Jordan's embassy in Tehran soon after.

Bomb Explodes at Al-Zarqa' Theater, Injures 2

JN0102143094 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1404 GMT 1 Feb 94

[Text] A responsible source at the Interior Ministry has said that at 1355 [1155 GMT] today an explosion took place at the Cinema Salwa in al-Zarqa'.

The source said citizen 'Id Salih al-Jahalin was seriously injured in the incident and is in bad condition. Hanafi Muhammad Sa'id, an Egyptian citizen, sustained medium injuries. The cinema sustained material damage.

The security organs immediately began an investigation to determine the causes of the explosion.

Seven Held for Questioning

JN0202185494 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1700 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Randah Habib dispatch from Amman]

[Text] Jordanian Interior Minister Salamah Hammad has told us that seven people were arrested yesterday for interrogation in connection with the bomb blast at an al-Zarqa' cinema house. The minister did not elaborate. However, an official Jordanian source said that four of the arrested people are charged with last Thursday's blast in Amman and that the other three are suspected of having a connecttion with the bomb attack in al-Zarqa yesterday.

The source said that those arrested belong to groups of returnees from Afghanistan, adding that the explosive material, Acetone Peroxide, was used in both blasts but said that the explosives were prepared in a very crude manner which means that the group did not have enough experience in such explosions.

The two explosions this week resulted in the injury of nine people, two seriously.

Clinton Report to Congress on Iraq Criticized

JN0202120994 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 2 Feb 94 p 4

[Editorial: "On Wrong Track Again"]

[Text] U.S. President Bill Clinton has effectively closed the door on lifting or even relaxing the sanctions imposed on Baghdad when he told U.S. congress Monday [31 January] that Iraqi President Saddam Husayn is still determined to develop nuclear weapons. This assessment came in spite of President Clinton's assurance to his nation that Iraq's nuclear weapons programme is "out of business" and Baghdad's official commitment to put its entire weapons programme including its nuclear capabilities, if any, under long-term international supervision.

Why then Washington still clings to its conviction that Iraq continues to covet nuclear and other mass destruction arsenal and therefore must be denied any relaxing of the punitive measures is something that goes beyond reasonable comprehension. State behaviour cannot be judged on metaphysical basis but rather on hard evidence unless of course there is no intention whatsoever to treat the Arab Gulf country differently no matter how far it goes to meet its obligations under U.N. Security Council resolutions. Since Iraq's mass destruction capabilities are for all intents and purposes "out of business," and will be monitored for as long as one can see, one fails to understand how Washington or anybody else for that matter can rightly guess the Iraqi intentions and find sinister plans in them.

The White House is also wrong in apportioning blame for the suffering of the Iraqi masses as a result of the sanctions solely on the Iraqi regime. Such a view is of little relief to the greater majority of Iraqis who have not been able to find or afford to buy basic medicines and food staples for over three years now, given the fact that the regime in Baghdad is solidly entrenched and has an effective grip on power, telling the people that they have only their leadership to blame is of no practical comfort. If pressure must continue to be applied against the Iraqi regime under all circumstances there is a good case for applying it in such a way as to minimise damage to the innocent people. Such a distinction between ruler and ruled could and should be made, and ways and means to give it effect is obviously not beyond the ingenuity of the western nations which still spearhead the hostile campaign against the country.

President Clinton was on stronger grounds when he called for the introduction of pluralistic democracy to the country as a condition for its full rehabilitation with the international community. Baghdad has yet to make significant movement in the direction of democracy and this is a source of alarm not only to Washington but also to the entire region, not to mention its own people. There is

clearly no long-term solution to the problem in that country as long as its people are denied democracy and basic human rights. Meanwhile, however, no matter where the responsibility lies, the Iraqi people themselves must enjoy the right to feed themselves properly and find the necessary medicines to treat the sick among them.

King Receives Telephone Call From Yemen's President

JN0202211894 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn has received a telephone call from his brother Yemeni President Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, during which they exchanged views on various Arab and regional issues of joint interest. They also discussed efforts being exerted to implement the agreement reached to settle differences between the brothers in Yemen, and the coming stages to implement the agreement in a way that guarantees the Yemeni people's unity and Yemen's territorial integrity.

Minister Views Iraq's Dependence on Port of al-'Aqabah

JN0302085794 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 3-4 Feb 94 p 3

[Text] Amman—Jordan Wednesday [2 February] said Iraq would continue to rely heavily on the Red Sea port of al-'Aqabah after sanctions end because its own ports could not handle the demand.

"Iraq's dependence on the port of al-'Aqabah in the event of the lifting of sanctions will be primary because neither their port of Umm Qasr nor even Mersin Port would be enough to handle all their goods," Jordan's Transport Minister Adib Halasah told Reuters.

Jordanian concerns rose last November when Iraq began importing through Umm Qasr and said whenever possible it would directly import U.N.-permitted goods—mostly food and medicine.

"Whatever the size of Umm Qasr, and it's a large port, the anticipated rise in Iraq's import needs would make them need not just al-'Aqabah but other ports," said the minister.

Mr. Halasah said use of Umm Qasr, Iraq's only port, would not affect al-'Aqabah as "it would continue to be more economical for Iraq to import its European cargo through it." Umm Qasr would be used mainly for imports from the Far East.

He expected activity in al-'Aqabah to surge when sanctions end. Less than 100 trailers travel the al-'Aqabah-Baghdad route daily against 400 before the Gulf crisis.

Mr. Halasah said upgrading and modernisation of al-'Aqabah was underway to handle "the expected large volume of demand."

Sanctions were imposed because of Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990. Al-'Aqabah has also suffered from the U.N. inspection of al-'Aqabah-bound ships for goods that could violate the sanctions.

Port activity has fallen from pre-Gulf war level peaks of 20 million tonnes annually to around 13 million tonnes in 1993.

In an indication of confidence, Mr. Halasah said the Iraq-Jordan Land Transport Company decided in Baghdad last week to buy 100 Renault trucks to modernise its 420 trailer fleet.

The firm, set up in 1981 as a 50-50 joint venture between the two states, is registered as a Jordanian company and is not subject to aspects of the U.N. embargo imposed on Iraq.

Iraqi-Jordanian Company Registers $3 Million in Profits

JN2901124894 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 29 Jan 94 p 3

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—Despite international sanctions against Iraq the Iraqi-Jordanian Land Transport Company (IJTLC) registered a $3 million profit for 1993 and has decided to add 100 trucks to its present fleet of 420.

According to the Jordan News Agency, PETRA, Transport Minister Adeeb Halasa Friday [28 January] said that at its meting in Baghdad, the company also "reviewed plans for activating operations once the sanctions against Iraq are lifted."

The company, jointly owned by the Baghdad and Amman governments, had forcast a $10 million profit for 1993 in a board meeting held last May.

There was no official explanation for the reduced profit, reported REUTER.

But it was believed to be a result of reduced Iraqi trade through Jordan due to the kingdom's compliance with the sanctions, Iraq's introduction of strict trade and monetary regulations and the thorough inspection of cargo vessels bound for al-'Aqabah.

Mr. Halasa's comments were made in Baghdad at the end of a four-day annual board meeting, co-chaired by Mr. Halasa and his Iraqi counterpart Ahmad Mortada.

According to Petra the board also decided that plans for 1994 should include the prospect of operating its trucks outside Jordanian and Iraqi territory.

The company, which oversees freight between both countries, was established in 1981 with a capital of $50 million.

Mr. Halasa, who returned to Amman Friday, said that $8 million has been allocated for the purchase of the new trucks, but he declined to say when the purchase would be made.

He said the company discussed plans for operating a weekly flight between Amman and Baghdad to carry ailing

Iraqis who cannot afford the 1000-kilometre overland trip between the two countries. [sentence as published]

"We discussed all the measures that should be adopted once the United Nations approves Iraq's request for a weekly flight between both countries that was submitted two months ago," Mr. Halasa told PETRA.

The agency also quoted an Iraqi official as saying that Iraq will continue to use al-'Aqabah for its imports despite the reopening of Umm Qasr Port in the Gulf in November.

Jordan was concerned that Iraqi imports through al-'Aqabah could diminish because of the reopening of Umm Qaser.

Omani Minister Arrives With Sultan Message

JN0302130794 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah, Oman's minister of state for foreign affairs, today arrived in Amman on a brief visit to Jordan during which he will relay an oral message to His Majesty King Husayn from his brother Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id of Oman.

He was received at Amman Civilian Airport by Talal-Sat'an al-Hasan, minister of state for foreign affairs, senior Foreign Ministry staff, and the Omani ambassador in Amman.

Yusuf Bin-'Alawi Bin-'Abdallah spoke to our correspondent Muhammad al-Hajaya, and said:

[Begin Bin-'Abdallah recording] I have an oral message from his majesty the sultan to his brother His Majesty King Husayn Bin-Talal. The message concerns issues of joint interests and consultations over various issues. Oman, like Jordan, is concerned about all dimensions of the Arab interests and we hope the joint effort of the two kings will, God willing, be a blessed effort and bear fruit to benefit the Arab and Muslim nations.

Consultations between the leaders are continuing and I believe that circumstances are now better than what they were in the past. We hope that the efforts will, God willing, bear fruit for the benefit of common interests. [end recording]

Chinese Delegation Arrives for Trade Talks

JN0102132594 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 1 Feb 94

[Text] A Chinese delegation has arrived in Amman for trade talks on bolstering commercial exchanges between the two countries. The delegation, led by deputy chief of the Chinese Council for International Trade Development, Ye Peng, will meet private and public sector economists.

The trade balance between the two countries is still in China's favor. Jordan's imports of Chinese goods surged from $29 million in 1991 to $53 million in 1992. Jordanian exports to China, mainly potash, rose from $18 million in 1990 to 32.5 million dinars [as heard] in 1991.

EC Delegation Arrives in Amman 2 Feb

JN0202174594 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1700 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] A delegation from the European Community has arrived in Amman on a two-day visit to Jordan. The delegation, headed by Eberhardt Rhein, will meet a number of Jordanian official for discussing cooperation between Jordan and the EC.

Jordan signed a financial and technological protocol in 1991 with the Community, granting the kingdom 126 million European monetary units, including donations, loans, and economic reform aid.

Prime Minister Meets Eberhardt

JN0302132294 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali has received in his office a senior European Community official.

Mr. Eberhardt Rhein, director of the Mediterranean, Near East, and Middle East Division of the Commission of European Communities discussed with the premier means to bolster ties between Jordan and the EC to achieve a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

Earlier today, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Talal al-Hasan held talks with Mr. Rhein on similar issues, particularly that the EC heads the multilateral economic talks for peace in the Middle East.

Minister Addresses Parliament on Food, Drug Issues

JN0302092294 Amman THE STAR in English 3-9 Feb 94 p 1

["Special to THE STAR" by Ahmad Shakir and Ra'id al-'Abidi]

[Text] For the third time in as many months, the Government of Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali went into the Lower House Wednesday [2 February] to fight for its life, this time over the explosive issue of food and medicine in Jordan.

Dr. al-Majali was out of the country when his Health Minister Dr. 'Abd al-Rahim Malhas went on record to expose his own ministry and food and medicine wholesalers, and to point a finger at Dr. al-Majali himself two weeks ago. Dubbed as the "Malhasgate scandal," it created national hysteria, and deputies demanded a special session to hear the Government's reply to accusations made by a cabinet minister.

On Wednesday, Dr. Malhas marched into the House carrying an 800-page file said to contain names and figures documenting serious violations concerning food and drug imports. The file also implicates former officials, who had allowed the import and distribution of certain food products when Government laboratories had indicated that they were not fit for human consumption.

Dr. Malhas, who delivered the Government's reply, defended his press statements and said that Jordanians are victims of greedy food and medicine merchants. In his 70-minute speech, Dr. Malhas attacked the "whales" who imported food not fit for human consumption, and medicines that do not meet international standards. He said he had documents that prove some medicine importers are making over 300 percent in profits, and some as high as a 1000 percent profit on certain medicine shipments. He added that these companies had threatened to stop medicine imports if the Government did not agree to price increases. He went on to say that certain medicines that are available in Jordan do not meet international standards, while others do not even meet the standards of the countries where they are manufactured.

Dr. Malhas added that most of the imported meat, foodstuff and cheese is transported into Jordan in unrefrigerated trucks in temperatures reaching 35 degrees, and that the ministry had destroyed some of these because it was not fit for human consumption.

After Dr. Malhas' speech, deputies asked for copies of his file, while the Speaker of the Lower House asked the deputies not to pass the documents to the press so as not to interfere with the legal measures that are expected to be taken against those implicated.

The file is kept under police guard and its distribution is restricted to deputies until the House decides what to do with the case. The House will start to deliberate on it in the next session on Saturday.

In an attempt to take Dr. al-Majali off the hook, Dr. Malhas told the deputies that the ministry of health, with the support of the Prime Minister, took immediate measures to enforce health regulations and to fight what Dr. Malhas described as international food gangsters that sell bad foodstuff.

Dr. Malhas said there were gaps in regulations that allow medicine importers to import medicine into Jordan without getting approval from the ministry. He said the US Congress had passed legislation permitting US drug companies to export products which are otherwise banned in the United States. He added that a number of drugs available in the local market are not registered with the ministry and called for establishing an authority to monitor foodstuffs and medical products.

Dr. Malhas again warned of the greed of the so-called "whales", a few wholesalers who make their fortune by importing expired foodstuff into the country.

Dr. Malhas also mentioned cases where expiry dates have been changed and health certificates forged so that food could be allowed into the country. He said his file documents names and incidents of many of these cases.

He said the ministry had shut down over 16,000 factories, shops, bakeries and restaurants for health violations.

Al-Ramtha deputy 'Abd-al-Karim al-Doughmi supported Dr. Malhas's position, while Irbid deputy 'Abd-al-Ra'uf al-Rawabidah accused him of negligence. The Islamists did not take a position, but sources said they might oppose the minister after they received counter information from the president of the Pharmacists Association and IAF member Husam Musmar and a number of wholesalers who are also IAF members.

The fact that Dr. Malhas has provided evidence documenting serious health violations will undoubtedly shift attention from the Government to the so-called corruption cases.

Meanwhile, innocent traders and local pharmaceutical companies continue to suffer as a result of Dr. Malhas' initial statements. So far, Sudan and Tunis have suspended drug shipments until more information on the status of Jordan-made food and drugs become available. Dr. Malhas last last week said that Jordanian medicines are of high quality and that they were not included in his list of violators.

Interior Ministry Legalizes 22d Political Party

JN0102105694 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 1 Feb 94 p 7

[Text] Amman (J.T.)—The Ministry of Interior Monday [31 January] granted legal status to the Constitutional Jordanian Arab Front Party [hizb al-jabhah al-urduniyah al-'arabiyah al-dusturiyah], making it the 22nd Jordanian party to be legalised. The Jordan News Agency, PETRA, Monday reported that the Ministry informed the secretary general of the party, Milhim al-Tall, of its decision. The party's constituent assembly last month authorised Mr. al-Tall along with members Ahmad al-'Awayishah, Shahir al-Rawashidah, 'Ali al-Talafih and Muhammad Khattab to apply for licensing. The party, which is almost exclusively made up of former adherents to the Syrian Ba'th Party, joins four other political parties on the pan-Arab spectrum. These parties are the Jordan Socialist Ba'th Party, the Progressive Arab Ba'th Party, the Jordan Arab Democratic Party and the most recently licensed National Action Front Party. The party's leader, Mr. al-Tall, ran for a Muslim seat in Amman's Third District in the 1989 parliamentary elections. During his campaign, he openly advocated Jordan's union with Syria.

Statement on Investigation of Diplomat's Murder

NC0202205894 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Statement by Minister of Interior Bisharah Mirhij followed by remarks in response to questions by unidentified correspondents at the end of the Central Internal Security Council meeting in the Presidential Palace in Beirut on 2 February—recorded]

[Text] [Begin recording] [Mirhij] The Central Internal Security Council held an extraordinary meeting this afternoon, chaired by the president of the republic. The prime minister, the ministers of defense and interior, the appeals public prosecutor, the government's commissioner at the Military Court, and heads of the security agencies attended the meeting. The conferees reviewed all aspects of the security situation in the country and orders and directives were issued to carry out the necessary security measures.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, have you taken any measures to provide more security for diplomats and embassies?

[Mirhij] The Central Internal Security Council discussed this issue, which will naturally be taken into consideration.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, a Jordanian delegation arrived today to pursue investigations. Will you [words indistinct] with it to uncover the culprits?

[Mirhij] Jordan is a fraternal country with which we have links at the level of the interior ministries through the Arab League's Arab interior ministers' conference. We have close cooperation with Jordan and will receive the Jordanian delegation and will cooperate fully.

[Correspondent] Has the investigation reached an advanced stage?

[Mirhij] The investigation is now in the hands of the Lebanese judiciary, which is responsible for making any statement on the issue.

[Correspondent] There are reports about a file that was with the Jordanian diplomat. Was there actually a file or are the reports just a rumor?

[Mirhij] Such information is in the hands of the Lebanese judiciary.

[Correspondent] Will measures be taken to improve the internal situation [words indistinct]?

[Mirhij] The necessary orders and directives were given at the meeting to all heads of security and military agencies to control the security situation at all levels.

[Correspondent] In your view, [word indistinct] the assassination of the Jordanian diplomat and the wave of violence in Egypt and Algeria that has spread to Jordan, especially the explosions that occurred at movie theaters in Jordan. Reports indicate that the operation was carried out by some fundamentalists. Do you agree with that?

[Mirhij] We will not jump to conclusions before the investigation is complete. [end recording]

Judge, Jordanian Envoy Discuss Diplomat's Murder

NC0202180594 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Regarding the ongoing investigations into the crime [assassination of Jordanian diplomat], Beirut's first investigations Judge Sa'id Mirzah met with Jordanian Ambassador Fakhri Abu-Talib at the embassy at 1800 today to discuss the circumstances of the incident. The meeting was attended by a Jordanian delegation that accompanied the ambassador. The delegation includes Jordanian Foreign Ministry Counselor Hamzah 'Abd-al-Qadir and a police colonel. A number of Lebanese security commanders also participated in the meeting.

President Ilyas al-Hirawi has sent Deputy Prime Minister Michel al-Murr to the Jordanian Embassy to offer condolences. Al-Murr conveyed to Ambassador Abu-Talib the condolences of the Lebanese Government and people. He noted that the president was eager to delegate him personally to show solidarity with the Jordanian king and people and with the embassy in particular. Ambassador Abu-Talib said the incident targeted Lebanon's security and stability.

Ambassador Abu-Talib returned from Amman today after accompanying the Jordanian diplomat's body there and received condolences at the embassy.

Minister of Labor 'Abdallah al-Amin cabled condolences to the Jordanian foreign minister, saying that the painful incident was a stab at Lebanon's security and peace.

U.S. Ambassador Delivers Message to Buwayz

NC0202174394 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz met U.S. Ambassador in Lebanon Mark Hambley this afternoon. They reviewed bilateral relations and the ongoing Washington talks.

Ambassador Hambley handed Minister Buwayz a written message from his U.S. counterpart Warren Christopher, the contents of which were not disclosed. The U.S. ambassador denied any knowledge of an imminent trip by Christopher to the region before the resumption of talks. He said that the approval of the appointment of Dr. Riyad Tabbarah as Lebanon's ambassador in Washington is being discussed by the two governments and that once the approval is given it will be made public at the proper time.

Minister Buwayz met today with Ambassador Tabbarah, who said that he will leave for Washington when he receives the U.S. Administration's approval.

Hizballah Leader Criticizes U.S. Policy

NC0302084594 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 21 Jan 94 p 2

[Excerpts] On the Day of the Wounded and the birthday of Abu-al-Fadl al-'Abbas, the Institution of the Oppressed and the Wounded of the Islamic Revolution in Lebanon held a ceremony in Burj al-Barajinah attended by Hizballah Secretary General Hasan Nasrallah; Deputy Ibrahim Amin al-Sayyid, leader of the parliamentary Faithfulness to the Resistance bloc; Deputies al-Hajj 'Ali 'Ammar and al-Hajj Muhammad Barjawi; al-Hajj Husayn al-Shami, the official responsible for the central bureau for social work; His Eminence Sayyid 'Isa al-Tabataba'i, general supervisor of the Islamic Revolution Institutions in Lebanon; Muslim scholars; and a crowd of wounded people and their families.

The Hizballah secretary general delivered a speech, which he began by talking about Abu-al-Fadl al-'Abbas, his importance, and his relations with Imam al-Husayn. [passage omitted]

Addressing those who maintain a good opinion of the Americans and expect them to do good, he said: "The mujahidin, the oppressed, and the Islamic peoples who experienced this regime and this administration understand the U.S. position and role in dealing with events and developments. A U.S. congressional delegation arrived in Lebanon yesterday to collect information about missing Israeli soldiers. We regarded this matter and the manner in which the delegation entered Lebanon as an insult to Lebanon and the Lebanese people. It has come to collect information and solve the problem of a small number of Israeli soldiers who were killed in Lebanon."

His eminence asked: "What were these soldiers doing in Lebanon? Were they tourists, diplomats, or merchants? Were they not occupation soldiers killing people and attacking and destroying the roofs over the heads of women and children?"

He said: "These murderers, occupiers, and criminals warranted the dispatch of a congressional delegation by their American master—a delegation that penetrated barriers to collect information about them to reassure their Jewish families, while there are hundreds of Lebanese and thousands of Palestinian prisoners and detainees held in occupation prisons. Everyone knows the extent of suffering, pain, torture, and coercion that the prisoners are experiencing. The American master does not find any need or reason to visit the Lebanese and Palestinian prisoners and detainees. Why?" [passage omitted]

His eminence said: "If the United States deals with a purely humanitarian issue with such crudeness, unfriendliness, and racial discrimination, what can we expect from it on political issues and in what affects the future of this area and its peoples?"

He said: "There are no Arabs, Lebanese, Palestinians, or Muslims in the U.S. political view and dictionary. There is something called Israel's interests. The United States might respect some of the interests of others if that will maintain its own interests and achieve the interests of the Israeli enemy." [passage omitted]

His eminence held the United States fully responsible for the occupation of Arab territory, imprisonment of people, killing of civilians, harming of the wounded, the war and destruction, and undermining the political and security situation in this area. [passage omitted]

Al-Tufayli Views al-Asad-Clinton Summit

NC0302112094 Beirut AL-'AHD in Arabic 21 Jan 94 p 18

[Article by former Hizballah Secretary General Shaykh Subhi al-Tufayli: "The Geneva Summit and Lebanon 'the Happy Absentee!'—The Syrians Avoid the Normalization Pitfall"]

[Text] The meeting between Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad and U.S. President Bill Clinton finally took place in Geneva this week. The various attitudes to the meeting depended on where one stood. Generally the Arab media welcomed and supported the meeting, regarding it as an incomparable achievement in the development of Syrian-U.S. ties, the issues under discussions, and the Syrian-Zionist negotiations.

It is clear that the Geneva meeting laid the foundations of better ties between the United States and Syria. Their interest in promoting bilateral ties was clearly demonstrated by the instructions given to the two countries' foreign ministers to handle unresolved issues between them in a detailed and open manner, as Clinton put it.

Syria's regional role in a political settlement was recognized, in Clinton's own words. Clinton said: There will be no comprehensive peace in the Middle East unless he (Hafiz al-Asad) is willing to assume a leading role. The Syrians maintained that they elicited an acknowledgement, spelled out by Clinton, of certain points that had been disputed for some time. These included the following: The Americans committed themselves to a "full peace plan" based on UN Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338 and on the land-for-peace principle, which practically means accepting the Syrian viewpoint on the negotiations.

The Syrians are seeking to draw up an agreement that would enable them to avoid normalization entailing diplomatic, trade, and cultural ties. They have bolstered their position by pointing to several examples, including the failure of a similar agreement with Egypt—the Egyptian regime failed to fulfill its normalization commitments despite numerous attempts because the Egyptian public was strongly against normalization. The Syrians also explained that their country's special situation cannot tolerate normalization.

The speech that President al-Asad made in Geneva included a clear remark about this: "Hundreds of thousands have sacrificed their lives to defend the homeland

and uphold its rights. There's hardly a house in Syria that did not offer a martyr who fell in the defense of the Arab nation and its rights."

It was as if al-Asad was saying a river of blood exists in Syria, in addition to the Euphrates, over which one cannot easily jump.

If the Syrians succeed in their effort to draw up a new formula for a solution with the Zionist entity, we will have two types of settlements in the region: one that opens the doors wide for all forms of relations and alliances and another that ends the state of war but keeps all doors closed. This latter type will allow many regional countries to adopt the Syrian concept of a political settlement. Meanwhile, the Zionists and Americans are trying to open all Arab doors to all forms of normalization. To the Zionist entity normalization is a primary condition and on its basis the "Camp David" accord, the "Gaza-Jericho" agreement, the draft agreement with the Jordanians, and the 17 May Accord [of 1983 with Lebanon, later abrogated] were concluded.

The ongoing negotiations with many Arab countries presuppose acceptance of the Zionist entity's concept of a settlement. Acting according to the Syrian concept of a settlement will damage, even if relatively, the Zionist plans in the region and relations with some Arab countries and will delay some of the normalization plans for years to come. This might lay the basis for developments and events that do not serve the U.S.-Zionist hegemony plan. It also explains the U.S. and Zionist insistence on normalization.

This became evident in the speech that former U.S. President Bush delivered at the Madrid conference, when he stressed that the U.S. concept of a settlement is based on diplomatic, economic, cultural, media, tourism, and development relations. The enemy's prime minister followed him in stressing this concept. This explains the relatively cool reaction in Palestine to the Geneva summit and the Israelis' demand to hear the Syrian president's unequivocal support for normalization. The word "peace" voiced by the Syrian president in Geneva is not enough.

This means (despite the strong optimism about the possibility of reaching quick results from the negotiations) that it is difficult to accept the Syrian concept of a settlement despite the tottering of the "Gaza-Jericho" agreement and the dependence of the Jordanian and Lebanese signatures on the Syrian one. Yet, according to observers' expectations, these rounds of negotiations should result in a solution to the problem. Lebanon is the major absentee, despite the utterances of joy and delight expressed by officials through the media. The U.S. President, who was keen not to leave the mistaken impression of being against President al-Asad, who agreed with his concept of "peace" and "Lebanon's future," did not want to touch on many issues. He made it clear in his speech that Lebanon has no place in the U.S. Administration's thinking. Overall U.S. practices and the way it is handling the Middle East problem and the negotiations indicate that this is the case.

President al-Asad's reference to Resolution 425 does not change the picture at all. This is another stigma added to the Lebanese regime's black record. This regime appears to have undertaken the task of going down with the same speed that the resistance in Lebanon is rising. The brighter the resistance and the mujahidin become and the more they light the nation's path, the more the regime gets immersed in the darkened dens of vice, as if this regime's men without hesitation yielded to the power of the Jews and their masters who are imposing their hegemony on many ruling regimes in the world. They have accepted this new master as their god to pray to and entreat. They are accompanied in this by a vociferous media that is in control of the masses and is bewitching many to the extent that one starts to believe that apostasy is going to live forever and that Islam, the resistance men, and all the honest people are on their way out.

We would like here to recall the firm and decisive divine pledge that was mentioned in the Holy Koran and the Prophet's traditions, which emphasizes that the battle between Muslims and Jews is continuing, that there is no peace and no conciliation [la salam wa la sulh] with them, that the charters and treaties will not live, and that the mujahidin will enter (the temple, as they entered it before, and to visit with destruction all that fell into their power) [Koranic verse].

Peace Requires 'Decisive Shift' in Israeli Policy

JN0202145494 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: In Washington, peace talks at the level of delegation heads continue amid repeated U.S. statements that this time the talks should produce positive results and concrete progress. Reports also say the U.S. secretary of state is planning to visit the region next month in a fresh bid to advance the peace process, especially on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks.

The United States apparently attaches great importance to the current Washington talks, due to its firm conviction that peace in the Middle East is impossible without Syria and that reaching a Syrian-Israeli agreement will open all the doors of the region to a just, comprehensive, and durable peace.

The Geneva summit between Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton centered on the essence of Middle East peace. It concluded that there is a need to establish a real and firm peace accepted by the peoples of the region—a peace that reflects positively on their countries and that can withstand successive developments. President al-Asad called such a peace the peace of the brave, in accordance with which occupation will end and Arab rights will be restored.

For its part, Syria has announced it will continue to seek a just and comprehensive peace. Perhaps the best evidence of its belief in peace, and in efforts to achieve it, is the talks it is holding in Washington, despite public Israeli pronouncements that reflect no change in the Israeli position, even after the Geneva summit. The summit tossed the ball into the Israeli court. It proved Syria really believes in peace and is struggling to achieve a just, honorable solution accepted by current generations and safeguarded by future generations—peace that enables them to devote their resources to development and progress.

We say this because Israeli officials, especially the head of the Israeli government, have recently cast doubt on Syria's intentions and sought to undermine its role and status in the region. They did not conceal their concern about the U.S. shifting toward Syria because it is the key to peace in the region. President Clinton and the U.S. secretary of state said Syria is an extremely important country that has a pivotal role to play in the peace process.

By casting such doubts, the Israelis seek to circumvent the objective of a just and comprehensive peace in the region. Such peace requires full Israeli withdrawal from the Golan, southern Lebanon, and all occupied Arab territories, and the implementation of Security Council resolutions to the letter.

It is no coincidence that the head of the Israeli government has raised the idea of a referendum on the Golan, contrary to all international resolutions, charters, and principles. The Golan has been Syrian territory since time immemorial. There can be no peace without its full return to the mother homeland.

Threatening to conduct a referendum is only a maneuver to circumvent the objective of a just and comprehensive peace. It is also an attempt to contain the U.S. position and conviction that Syria is the key to the Middle East peace process.

The current Washington talks will be a decisive test to Israel. The whole world expects a decisive shift by the Israeli rulers toward peace and an end to the policy of maneuver and procrastination that has so far prevented substantive progress leading to genuine, comprehensive peace in the Middle East.

Sources See 'Test' Facing Rabin Government

PM0202105694 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 1 Feb 94 p 3

[Salwa al-Ustuwani report: "Syria Accuses Israel of Obstructing Peace"]

[Excerpt] Damascus—Syria yesterday accused Israel of continuing to adhere to its method, obstructing any tangible progress in the peace process. Authoritative Syrian sources told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the Washington negotiations have so far inspired no hope of achieving success in the peace process. And that the Israeli delegation continues to avoid providing clear and frank answers with regard to the issue of complete withdrawal from the Golan and the occupied Arab territories, which is the basis for a just and comprehensive peace.

The sources added that the round to be held between the Syrian and Israeli delegations will be crucial in determining the fate and future of the negotiation process, especially as the United States has decided to assume the task of imparting the necessary impetus to the political peace process on all tracks and renewed before the world in Geneva its commitment to achieving a just and comprehensive peace on all fronts.

The sources went on: Thus Rabin and his government will be subjected to a test with regard to their willingness to respond to the will of the international community and Washington.

The Syrian sources urged the international community to shoulder the responsibility for salvaging and implementing its legitimacy and putting an end to Israeli evasion. [passage omitted]

Editor Views Geneva Summit, U.S. Golan Positions

94AE0069A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 19, 20 Jan 94

[Article by Muhammad al-Rumayhi, chief editor of Kuwait's AL-'ARABI magazine: "Mountains Don't Meet, People Do"]

[19 Jan p 15]

[Text] A transmitted proverb or common saying that recurs in numerous languages says something to the effect that two mountains cannot meet, but two people can. In

other words, mountains cannot meet, whereas people can. This saying or proverb is reiterated on occasions when adversaries, estranged people, and people in disagreement meet, especially when the desire or ambition to meet exists.

This idea comes to mind when one sees and hears what millions saw and heard via the live television relay of the meeting between U.S. President Clinton and Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad in Geneva last Sunday.

Regardless of the outcome of this meeting, which must have been drafted in advance because it is not for nothing or just to drink a cup of coffee together that prominent leaders meet—regardless of the outcome, we say that this meeting in itself gives a good idea of the developments occurring in the current policy.

Each of the two men who met amid strict security measures in Geneva came from a different land, different time, with a different legacy, and also with a different dream. But they met, and in this contrast lies the essence of the harmony that will perhaps dominate the political logic of the post-cold war world. In this contrast lies the fall of the ideological givens and the collapse of the old guard in today's, and perhaps in tomorrow's, world

At the press conference held after the meeting, President Clinton said that he had heard about the Syrian president's endurance and that he became certain of this endurance through the discussions which lasted more than four hours between the two of them and after which he had to take a break to rest. President Clinton added that despite this, the two men were able to discuss numerous issues.

This reference shows not only what news agencies reported on the eve of the meeting about the personal qualities of each of the two presidents but also indicate, if we dive beyond the surface of the words, the degree of difference in the makeup and aspirations of each of the two presidents. But despite this, the meeting went on and continued. It did not break up the way the Reykjavik summit in Iceland between Gorbachev and Reagan near the end of the cold war broke up.

The world has changed to such a degree that decision-makers in all parts of this world seek to meet, in spite of their differences. Reports, the likes of which President Clinton must have read before meeting with al-Asad, say that the Syrian president is the last Arab radical, that he is the "cunning ascetic" who is characterized by "patience, cunning, and the determination to maintain a vital role for himself in the regional and international arenas." The reports add that he is an "Arab nationalist with a penetrating insight and one who always clings to the long-range view of affairs."

On the other side, the U.S. President seems to be the antithesis of his partner at the meeting. In addition to the difference of generations to which each of the two presidents belongs and the nearly two-decade difference in their ages, Clinton is as far from radicalism as can be. He is closer to the impetuosity characterizing the members of his generation, which was raised in the embraces of the boundless U.S. liberalism and of the pragmatism that hallows no particular tactic or strategy and that emanates from the dynamic U.S. spirit which moves with extraordinary flexibility within the framework of the immediate moment and interest.

It may be said that personal dimensions are nothing but a narrow margin on the cards of the major players at the political table. What is fundamental and more important in their cards lies in the legacy of government in their countries and in certain strategies that are not determined by individuals, regardless of the degree of their influence, but by their countries' major interests. Even in this regard, the distance was immense between the two leaders at last Sunday's summit in Geneva.

Al-Asad went to Geneva, carrying in his quiver arrows aimed at certain targets, which have been defined by observers as: refraining from bargaining on any pan-Arab constants, especially land. Land is sacred in the political education that was received by the Syrian president's generation and which has continued to be disseminated among subsequent generations, especially in Syria. This is a pan-Arab strategy. The Israelis are aware of this. Gad Ben Ari, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's spokesman, has said, "I don't expect any flexibility to develop in the Syrian position and I don't expect Syria to reduce the price it demands in return for peace." The same view is reflected in a statement made by Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador to Washington, who said prior to Sunday's summit, "There is a difference between the hopes that Syria and the United States attach to these meetings. Of course, there is a difference between the Syrian hopes and Israeli hopes." It is well known that Rabinovich heads the Israeli delegation to the bilateral talks with Syria—talks which have been running in place for more than a year.

So, the Golan is not just a strategic Syrian plateau from which it is difficult for Israel to withdraw. Rather, it is a symbol of the immense disagreement within the meeting and a stumbling block on the path of the peace negotiations. It is also evidence of the new logic that calls for continuing the dialogue despite the evident impossibility of reaching agreement. Even though the new Israeli Government accepted the principle of withdrawal from the Golan Heights for the first time in September 1992, it said that this withdrawal would not be a complete withdrawal. A week before the Clinton-al-Asad meeting, Rabin declared, "To date, I have only talked about withdrawal from the Golan, not from the entire Golan. This is my position." Yosi Beilin, the Israeli deputy foreign minister, has said within nearly the same context, "I am convinced that the establishment of Jewish settlements in the Golan Heights or in any other territories after the 1967 war was a mistake. But now that the settlements exist, we cannot erase them from the map so simply." The Golan, where 12,000 Israeli settlers live in 33 settlements next to 16,000 Druze citizens, continues to create obstacles. Israeli settlers have sent Clinton a message through the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv to ask him not to pressure Israel to withdraw from the heights. Sammy Bar-Lev, a leader of the

settlers in the occupied Syrian heights, has said, "The U.S. diplomat who received the message has asserted that the U.S. policy is based on not pressuring Israel."

So, the obstacle is huge. But the endeavors have not ceased, especially when we learn that those who have taken over the Middle East dossier in the Clinton administration are friends of Israel, which Clinton characterized in his election campaign as the "strategic and democratic ally." In one of his messages to voters, Clinton said, "Yes, Israel and the United States are at a turning point..... We ask you for generous financial support. Will you help me restore logic to the U.S.-Israeli relationship? Please, answer today and be generous. I swear that if I am elected president, I will never disappoint Israel." Figuring prominently among those who have taken over the Middle East dossier is Martin Indyk, an ex-chairman of Washington's Middle East Policy Institute, which is close to AIPAC [American-Israel Public Affairs Committee]. He was asked to draft an analysis to help formulate Clinton's Middle East plan. Indyk was helped in this regard by Les Aspin and Samuel Lewis. The former is a member of the advisory board of JENSA [as transliterated], a Jewish institute, and the second was a U.S. ambassador to Israel and then worked as chairman of the Israeli Bank Leumi. For the negotiations, Indyk proposed a U.S. policy that would embrace the Israeli viewpoint to the letter, whether on bilateral or regional negotiation issues. Indyk also insisted on rejecting the PLO and the idea of a Palestinian state and emphasized the need to besiege and pressure Syria and to give absolute priority to Israel's needs.

[20 Jan p 15]

[Text] In view of all of these circumstances, it may seem to those who experienced the old-style politics that any meeting between Clinton and al-Asad would be futile and a waste of time. But there are new considerations that become revealed when matters are viewed from a new angle.

For Syria, and we mean President al-Asad here, there are fundamental developments that make the world one that is different from the world in which Syria set the ceiling of its pan-Arab aspirations. The main support for Syria's military capability, and we mean here the Soviet Union, has nearly evaporated. The Arab system in which Syria formed a main axis has disintegrated and broken down since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait and since the subsequent breakdowns, as a result of which the Arab system has nearly collapsed. All these developments make the Syrian determination to cling to patience and obstinacy some sort of a miracle, especially Syria's rejection of 'Arafat's performance in the Gaza- Jericho accord. Syria bargained on the meager chances of success of the big hopes attached to this accord. It won the wager when the day for withdrawal of the Israeli Army from Jericho arrived without the accomplishment of this withdrawal. This point was added to the miracle of the Syrian obstinacy which borders on being some sort of extraordinarily sensitive political intuition or some sort of lucky strikes that come only to those who deserve them.

So, there are changes in the shape of the world around Syria. Despite its proficient intuition or its good luck, Syria is aware of the dimensions of this change.

As for Clinton's United States, there is something new here too, despite the U.S. strategic constants. Peter Tarnoff, U.S. undersecretary of state, has said, "Washington's international role will diminish because of the end of the cold war and because of the domestic U.S. economic crises." Even though U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher hastened to refute his deputy's statements, saying, "The United States holds, and will continue to hold, its distinguished place at the top of the new world order," Tarnoff's statements are profoundly significant. They are similar in nature to facts revealed by a slip of the tongue and they provide an indication of dimensions of the crisis experienced vis-a-vis the developments which the new Democrat U.S. administration is trying to absorb after a long absence from the White House. In addition to the strategic surprise embodied in the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, a collapse which has put the United States in the labyrinth of one who is looking for his next foe after the disappearance of a stubborn foe—in addition to this state of political ambiguity, the new administration lacked young cadres capable of keeping up with the consecutive developments emanating from the disappearance of the foe who had determined the power of the United States itself and who had mobilized its latent strengths. This is why Clinton has been compelled to rely on numerous figures from Carter's administration. Moreover, the Democrats have had to give up many of their conventional ideas and to adopt some Republican ideas and, consequently, they have had to deal with the U.S. foreign tendencies selectively and on a case-by-case basis. Therefore, it has become possible to ignore conventional constants in the Democrats' policy (such as sovereignty, democracy, human rights, and the UN's role) to adopt some sort of interventionism, which is called in the Democrats' new literature a "new kind of international intervention." But this intervention is indebted essentially to the Republicans' conventional tendencies.

Between the constant and the changeable in the new U.S. strategies, there arises to the surface a question about the Middle East's place in this state of affairs. The answer is summed up in that the United States will not confine itself to dealing with Israel as just a strategic ally, but will also deal with it as a "strategic partner," according to Dr. Muhammad al-Sayyid Sa'id, an expert on Arab strategy, who has added that the U.S. view of Israel as a strategic ally in the Middle East "means large possibilities of expansion in concluding joint weapons development programs, especially anti-rocket missiles. The important difference here is that the doves in the U.S. international military strategy are hawks where Israel is concerned, and they are loyal allies of Israel in particular."

All these circumstances make the observer who examines what is below the surface closely realize that Israel's strategic weight is increasing, not decreasing, in the body of the U.S. policy. But the careful observer must also realize that the Arabs' refraining—especially by Syria

which stands on the frontline with Israel—from dealing with this state of affairs represents silence on a tumor that grows and spreads until it becomes able to devour the entire body or it represents silence on a benign tumor that could become malignant if precautions are not taken to avert its further transformation.

It seems that the Syrian president has chosen to deal with this condition without delay. Meanwhile, the U.S. President seeks to move efficiently with his administration beyond just rearranging the affairs of his house to dealing with the world outside this house. It is no coincidence that Sunday's summit in Geneva came as a stop in a trip that took Bill Clinton to the den of his old foe to peacefully clip this foe's last claw in return for a few billion to be paid in installments. Clinton succeeded in wresting and disassembling the Ukraine's nuclear missiles and in purchasing the uranium they contain. He also succeeded in staging a scene that is of profound significance to the Americans—a scene embodied in turning the direction of the nuclear missiles of the former Soviet Union, which are found in Russia currently, away from U.S. cities. Perhaps at his meeting in Geneva, Clinton sought to eliminate the threat from a region that is of fundamental concern to the U.S. strategic interests. At a time when the new U.S. administration views Israel, according to its advisers' vision, as a strategic ally, it realizes that the ignition of any fires in the region will burn some of its interests. This is why the endeavor to launch a state of peace in the region is a sincere endeavor, even if it has been coupled with securing the "highest ceiling" of conditions or price in favor of Israel.

Yes, there are conflicting and intersecting interests in the Arab-Israeli condition. But by changing the perspective and taking the new developments into account, the examiner can find fine threads of joint interests if peace is accomplished, even if at the highest ceiling of the conditions of the parties concerned. The worsening danger of religious radicalism is something that all can see, be they Arabs, Americans, or Israelis. Transforming the battlefields into open markets provides numerous or some opportunities, even to the weaker parties within these markets, provided that the will to be industrious is there. It seems that "Syria's merchants" are confident of their skill and aren't afraid of opening these markets.

The world has changed swiftly in recent years, and it is still changing at an accelerating pace. It seems that all have developed the conviction that woe will befall those who fail to catch up with this train.

Sunday's meeting in Geneva between al-Asad and Clinton was some sort of catching up with the train of the speeding changes. All concealed results not withstanding, it suffices that this summit has produced a declaration of readiness to come out of the old fortresses and an acceptance of the logic of change. The U.S. President stated most explicitly that Syria is the key to comprehensive peace in the region and President al-Asad expressed his readiness to shoulder all the consequences of peace with Israel.

Truly, mountains do not meet, but people do. Mountains collapse if they move. But the outcome of every endeavor by men is an addition, or at least an addition in which there is no loss. We are confident that the meeting was a gain for all, or so we hope.

Citizens in Mourning Renew Faith in al-Asad

JN0202170594 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 2 Feb 94

[From the press review]

[Text] In a commentary today, TISHRIN says: The entire population of Damascus took to the streets, raising banners of sorrow and mourning and expressing their deep pain for the national loss represented by the death of Basil al-Asad. In a mammoth march of 1.5 million people, Damascus renewed its truthfulness to the great national leader, President Hafiz al-Asad, and expressed its love and sympathy to him.

TISHRIN adds: What has befallen leader al-Asad has been a blow to Syria as a whole. Every house and family are now bereaved. Yesterday, Damascus was a bright and lofty symbol of national unity whose pillars were laid down by President Hafiz al-Asad, who has strengthened this unity over the years. Al-Asad nurtured this unity by his work, sincerity, and struggle. This unity has borne fruit in terms of pride, dignity, and steadfastness in the face of enemies and suspect plots; in terms of adherence to values, principles, rights, land, and sanctities; and in terms of the relentless defense until the return of all the occupied Arab territories and the establishment of the Palestinian people's rights.

TISHRIN says: Today, Syria is waging its greatest ever battle, namely, the battle for a just and comprehensive peace that will end occupation, return the land, and establish rights and truth. TISHRIN notes that the firm national unity as expressed by our people on this great national loss, and which Damascus expressed by its mammoth march, will strengthen Syria's stand in its fierce battle for just and comprehensive peace.

Concluding, TISHRIN says: The great departed has left pain and sadness among his family and the Syrian families, but leader al-Asad has always derived strength and determination from the people's trust and waged the greatest and most noble battles. His last battle, the battle for a just and comprehensive peace, will be a new deed to be added to his many immortal deeds.

The newspaper AL-THAWRAH stresses that the march that was staged in bereaved Damascus yesterday was an expression of the sincerest condolences to leader al-Asad and his honorable family on this grievous calamity.

Al-THAWRAH says: This shocking calamity was unexpected. However, God's will is unavoidable, and the patient believers are the only ones who can stand fast and pass this test. Just as he has always been at all difficult times and in misfortunes, President al-Asad was, despite the calamity, the great leader and father whose heart has enough room for everyone and for all griefs and sorrows.

He is the one who consoled all the sons of the nation who were bereaved of the noble knight, Basil.

AL-THAWRAH explains the nature of the stage and the size of the grave threats and challenges to the homeland and the nation. This, the paper say, necessitates that we rise above our pain and heal our wounds in order to continue the battle of existence and destiny and of restoring rights.

AL-THAWRAH adds: The Syrian people were not alone in living the sorrow and anxiety, for the entire nation, throughout the greater homeland, mourned and shed tears on the departure of the knight Basil out of their faithfulness to the leader and father who carried their pan-Arab issues and concerns and who has honestly defended and is still defending them. The people and the nation stood at the side of President al-Asad, wishing him long life and strength so he will continue to be the inspired leader under whose banners the people will continue to line up and to seek support against tragedies and misfortunes.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: This is loyalty and faithfulness. Our people, who staged marches in Damascus and all the governorates yesterday to mourn the deceased, and who showed the greatest images of cohesion and national unity, are the same people who pledged allegiance to President al-Asad as a leader forever, and adhered to his triumphant march until the full liberation of land and the restoration of rights.

Khaddam Receives Visiting EC Delegation

JN0202075194 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam received an EC delegation headed by Eberhardt Rhein yesterday evening. The meeting was attended by Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahim Subay'i, minister of state for planning affairs, and (Allain Rodans), head of the EC mission in Damascus.

The talks dealt with the regional situation and Syrian-EC ties.

Afghanistan

President Meets Peace Delegation; No Results Known

BK0302113394 Hong Kong AFP in English 1115 GMT 3 Feb 94

[by Terence White]

[Text] Kabul, Feb 3 (AFP)—Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani met with the head of a 56-member peace delegation here Thursday, although the results of the talks are not yet known, official sources said.

Jallaluddin Haqani, a respected mojahedin commander from eastern Paktiya province, had arrived in the capital to attempt to bring an end to the Afghan factional fighting, now in its 34th consecutive day, they said.

Foreign Ministry officials said Haqani, who has set up a base at a military installation near Pul-e Charkhi, some five kilometres (three miles) east of here, sent a representative to meet Rabbani but other sources say he came in person.

It is understood that Haqani has already met with Rabbani's rival Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, who is allied with former communist militia General Abdol Rashid Dostum.

Hekmatyar is demanding the resignation of Rabbani and the setting up of an interim government to administer general elections, while Rabbani has so far refused talks with Hekmatyar so long as he continues his alliance with Dostum.

The talks here were not marred by shelling as both sides by and large held their fire Thursday, allowing civilians to move in large numbers on the streets.

A brief burst of small-arms fire in the old city Jadayi Maiwand bazaar sent civilians running for cover just before noon but in the adjacent Mandayi bazaar, which is the main depot for consumer supplies for all minor Kabul markets, there was a brisk trade in items like tea, sugar, dried fruits, batteries and cigarettes.

Meanwhile a five-truck relief convoy of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) arrived in the capital carrying nearly 17 tonnes of wheat-flour for distribution to the homeless on both sides of the eastern Kabul frontlines.

Factions Declare Jalalabad Safe Haven

LD0202141394 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 1300 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Afghan warring factions have agreed to declare Jalalabad a safe haven, at the instance of Pakistan. A Foreign Office spokesman told newsmen in Islamabad today, that the agreement came after meetings separately of Pakistan's charge d'affaires in Kabul with President Borhanoddin Rabbani and Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar. He said there has also been a positive response from General 'Abdorrahim [as heard] Dostam, when the acting consul general of Pakistan contacted him at Mazar-e Sharif.

The spokesman said Pakistan would continue to provide humanitarian relief to the displaced people at Jalalabad. He said Pakistan was pressing all parties to the conflict to accept a cease- fire.

On the other hand, the 100-member Jalalabad mediation team, which arrived in Pol-e Charkhi near Kabul last night, has started informal contacts with leaders of the warring factions, to prepare the groundwork for negotiations.

Meanwhile a rocket and heavy artillery exchange rocked the Afghan capital for more than an hour today. Forces opposing the government attacked Kabul's [word indistinct] Wazir Akbar Khan district with rockets. The pro-government batteries retaliated for more than an a hour.

4-Day Conditional Cease-fire Noted

LD0202231594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 2030 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] The Afghan opposition coordination council announced: After a call by the United Nations, opposition forces have agreed to a four-day conditional cease-fire. This is when warring groups in Afghanistan have also agreed to set Jalalabad as a secure area. Here is our colleague, Khameneh, in Pakistan with a report:

[Khameneh] The leaders of the warring groups in Kabul have agreed to declare Jalalabad, in eastern Afghanistan, as a secure area where clashes and military operations will be avoided.

The Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani, and the Prime Minister Golboddin Hekmatyar, in separate meetings with the Pakistani Charge d'affaires in the last 48 hours, have shown a positive reaction to a call by Pakistan for declaring Jalalabad as a secure area. A spokesman for the Pakistani Ministry for Foreign Affairs, in a news conference this evening, announcing this, added: The acting Pakistani consul in Mazar-e Sharif, also, in a meeting with General Dostam has received a similar response to the call.

After recent clashes among rival groups in Kabul, which began 33 days ago, about 80,000 out of 250,000 Afghan refugees have sought refuge in Jalalabad and its suburbs. Pakistan's efforts to declare Jalalabad as a secure area can be construed as a restraining act toward Afghan refugees entering Pakistani soil. During the first 10 days of fighting in Kabul, about 17,000 new Afghan refugees entered Pakistan and eventually, some three weeks ago, Islamabad banned Afghan nationals from entering that country without a valid visa.

Golboddin, Dostam Forces Firing Missiles at Kabul

LD0202181594 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Today, the infamous Golboddin and Dostam militias again attacked Kabul residential areas with missiles.

A military correspondent of the Bakhtar Information Agency reported that as a result of the missile and heavy weapons attack, a number of our citizens have been martyred and a number have been wounded. The wounded were transferred to hospitals and are under treatment. Also heavy material loss has been inflicted on Kabul citizens and the public property.

Bangladesh

Six Killed, 30 Injured in Attack on Opposition Parade

BK3101163894 Hong Kong AFP in English 0956 GMT 31 Jan 94

[Text] Dhaka, Jan 31 (AFP)—At least six people were killed and 30 others injured Monday when an opposition Awami League (AL) procession was fired on by unidentified gunmen, pushing the toll to seven in election violence, police and witnesses said.

Gunmen opened fire on the supporters of AL mayoral candidate Mohammad Hanif, who is leading in the weekend polls, in the Lalbagh area, killing six instantly. Several of the injured were in critical condition.

"We do not have any details on who fired," one police officer at the Lalbagh police station said.

The injured were being treated at a local hospital.

During Sunday's first ever mayoral and city commissioner elections, one school boy was killed and more than 200 were injured in sporadic clashes between rival groups.

Hanif is leading with a wide margin against Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) nominee Mirza Abbas in Dhaka, while another AL candidate, Mohiuddin Chowdhury, has won in the port city of Chittagong, according to preliminary election commission results.

But the BNP clinched victory in the cities of Khulna and Rajshahi.

The elections are seen here as the first popularity test of the two main political groups, and political analysts said the AL sees the municipal vote as a way of rebuilding its strength in crucial urban areas before the 1996 national polls, after losing all eight Dhaka seats and most of the other urban seats to the BNP in the 1991 parliamentary election.

15,000 Join Mourning March 1 Feb

BK0102131394 Hong Kong AFP in English 1015 GMT 1 Feb 94

[Text] Dhaka, Feb 1 (AFP)—At least 15,000 residents of the Bangladeshi capital Dhaka Tuesday joined a mourning march and mass prayers for the six opposition supporters gunned down by rivals in post-election violence, witnesses said.

The marchers, including leaders from Shayk Hasina Wajed's main-opposition Awami League (AL) and the left-wing Workers Party, carried coffins of the dead to the downtown Baitul Mukarram national mosque.

They silently carried black flags and a banner demanding the punishment of the killers, and prayed for the dead.

The marchers were mostly from the Lalbagh area, in the old parts of Dhaka, where six people were killed and more than 30 injured Monday when AL's victory procession was fired on by unidentified gunmen, a day after the country's first mayoral city elections, police and witnesses said.

A policeman on duty said the number of mourners could be as high as 30,000.

The mourners later buried the dead without incident in a nearby graveyard, but under heavy security, witnesses said.

Security was intensified Tuesday as the residents staged a half-day protest strike, and the atmosphere was tense, with shops, schools and businesses remaining closed.

"We have strong police and BDR (para-military Bangladesh Rifles) forces deployed in the area," one police officer at the Lalbagh police station said.

No violence was reported during the stoppage.

Witnesses and police had said earlier that unidentified gunmen opened fire on supporters of AL mayoral candidate Mohammad Hanif, who took a commanding lead in weekend polls, killing six. Eighteen supporters were reported to be in stable condition Tuesday.

But Dhaka newspapers reported Tuesday that the attack was carried out by Abdul Aziz, a member of the ruling Bangladesh Nationalist Party and a losing candidate for city commissioner, and his supporters.

The mass circulation Daily ITTEFAQ newspaper said Abdul Aziz had gone into hiding, and one resident said unidentified people ransacked and looted his home late Monday.

The government, in a press note late Monday said six suspects from two rival groups have been arrested in connection with the "unfortunate incident."

Angry mourners Monday also had attacked three government ministers when they went to the hospital to pay homage to the dead, but police rescued them unscathed by throwing tear gas and using batons.

During Sunday's first ever mayoral and city commissioner elections, one school boy was killed and more than 200 were injured in sporadic clashes between rival groups.

Hanif is leading Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's BNP nominee ex- mayor Mirza Abbas, by 75,200 votes, in 704 out of 737 districts in Dhaka.

In the port city of Chittagong, AL candidate Mohiuddin Chowdhury was unofficially declared mayor, based on preliminary election results.

While BNP clinched victory in the cities of Khulna and Rajshahi.

Because of the violence, the election commission cancelled voting in 26 centres and withheld results in three others.

The official BANGLADESH SANGBAD SANGSTHA News Agency said the results in four districts "could not be traced," but the total number of votes cast there was 72,080. BSS did not elaborate, but there was a report that a recount would be held.

The elections were crucial, as it was considered the first popularity test of the two main political groups since the 1991 parliamentary elections under a caretaker government.

Editorial Assesses 'Successes' of Clinton Presidency

BK0302020994 Dhaka DAINIK INQILAB in Bengali 29 Jan 94 p 5

[Editorial: "President Clinton's Speech]

[Text] President Bill Clinton in his address to the joint session of the U.S. Congress last Tuesday [January 25] apprised the people of his country about the programs he implemented during the past year and gave hints about his future course of action. He praised the Congress for approving his proposals for reducing the budgetary deficit, adopting legislation relating to the ownership of guns, and approving the NAFTA trade accord. President Clinton took these measures after assuming office. But the question remains as to how successful has he been in implementing his election promises, which included ensuring the welfare of the people, increasing health care facilities, creating new job opportunities, and developing the economy. In this regard there is mixed opinion. The opponents of President Clinton say that he has not be able to achieve any remarkable success in fulfilling his election promises. On the other hand, his party and supporters are more or less satisfied with his actions and and successes. The Clinton administration has been successful to some extent in increasing employment opportunities. The President has stated that the rise in employment opportunities during his term of office was much more in comparison with the past four years. The health reform measures taken by President Clinton have been criticized by members of both parties. People are not very optimistic about the success of his moves to improve social welfare services and develop the economy.

In his speech, President Clinton gave special emphasis to issues relating to the improvement of health care facilities, reforming social welfare services, reducing crime, and developing the economy. He acknowledged that a lot more has to be done for the welfare of the people. The President said that the employment level is still unsatisfactory, a lot of violence took place during this period, and there is a lack of optimism in many areas. He further said that social welfare measures will be reformed to reduce the dependence of people on government allowances and to find jobs for them. The President reiterated his pledge to guarantee health care. He also pledged to formulate stringent laws to curb crime and added that more police will be deployed. Life imprisonment will be sentenced for persons involved in more than one crime. He also reiterated his pledge to boost the economy and said that he will present a tough budget next year. Dwelling on foreign policy, President Clinton emphasized the need to further strengthen ties with the allies of the United States. He further stated that support for the new democratic states and the economic reforms in Russia will continue.

The U.S. citizens voted for Bill Clinton with great expectations for changes for a better life. Such large-scale changes cannot be expected within the short span of one year. It is not difficult to initiate the process of change. At this moment, it is not possible to ascertain how much success Clinton has had in changing the fortunes of the American people during his one year in office. This much can be said: Clinton is making efforts to abide by his pledges. He has successes and failures. During this period, the United States faced disaster and crisis on various fronts. Repeated natural disasters have become a cause of concern. In these natural calamities, property worth several thousand dollars has been destroyed. This will have an adverse effect on the economy. The setbacks suffered by President Clinton in foreign policy cannot be overlooked. U.S. policy failed in various countries, including Bosnia, Somalia, North Korea, Pakistan, and China. It is natural that the effects of these failures will be reflected on the domestic front. If all factors are taken into consideration, it could be said that the United States will face harder days ahead. Hence, President Clinton, the U.S. Administration, and the people should display more patience, tolerance, farsightedness, and judiciousness.

India

Talks Begin With PRC Group on Border Troop Reduction

BK0302111394 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] The experts group of India and China today began their three-day talks on reduction of troop level along the line of actual control. The 12-member Chinese delegation consisting of top army personnel and diplomats is led by the deputy director in the foreign ministry, Mr. Fu Xuezhang. The Indian delegation is led by the joint secretary in the External Affairs Ministry, Mr. Shiv Kumar Menon.

Paper Protests Clinton Remarks on Punjab, 'Sikh Rights'

BK0202033894 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 25 Jan 94 p 8

[Editorial: "Cockpit of Intrigues"]

[Text] President Clinton is fast gaining recognition as the patron-in-chief of secessionists of South Asia. After his recent gesture to Ghulam Nabi Fai, chief of one of the Pakistan-funded outfit of Kashmiri separatists in the US, it has now been disclosed by the US-based Council of Khalistan that Clinton has also expressed his concern for "Sikh rights" in Punjab. He has done so in a letter to Congressman Gary A. Condit who had drawn the former's attention to "the crisis in Khalistan." The mischief is writ large on statements both by Condit and Aulakh, the leader of the Sikh separatists. Yet, the State Department would have us believe that the letter was written to Condit only by way of courtesy—a letter in which Clinton refers to Punjab as though it were the 51st state of the US. In doing so, the Department has conveniently tried to divert attention from the clear prospect of an early end to the prolonged campaign of brutal murders in Punjab, from the establishment of an elected government and from increasing signs of normalcy there. This happy turn of events should have gladdened the hearts of Americans whose government has repeatedly professed to come down heavily on international terrorism. But Clinton's administration has deemed it more important to warm the cockles of the hearts of foreign-based chiefs of separatist organisations who have been demoralised by the rapid restoration of peace in Punjab.

Secessionists of every kind have good reason to think that Clinton and his buddies in the White House are there to ensure that they all will remain in business. They have discovered that they only need to pose as great champions of human rights to enlist Clinton's sympathy. In fact many worthies of the under-world around the world may take the cue from the American lobbyists for secessionism-cum-terrorism or their agents entrenched in present-day White House. The bulk of Clinton's staff seems to be preoccupied with salvaging his reputation in the wake of his and his wife's alleged malfeasance during his tenure as Governor of Arkansas. This may be one reason why lobbies working for dubious causes, apparently find "human rights" a magic formula to manipulate the White House.

Washington, in fact, is likely to become famous less as a capital of think-tanks than as the key nerve-centre of specialists in political destabilisation in the third world. What a parody of the world leadership of the unchallenged superpower! The CIA, the great expert in subversion, has nursed Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence [ISI] which has now taken over as the arch-stabiliser in South Asia. Clinton's touching concern for the feelings of American lobbyists for Pakistan's proteges among the Kashmiri and Punjabi separatists is apt to make ISI happy. It can count on its traditional links with the Pentagon being reinforced by a cooperative bureaucracy running the White House. Anyone can now get any dirty work done through Clinton's close aides just by chanting the mantra of human rights.

Paper Notes President's Remarks on 'Interference'

BK0302063694 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 27 Jan 94 p 8

[Editorial: "A Sombre Context"]

[Text] The republic enters its 45th year at a time of disquieting uncertainty in the rest of the world. If, in the past, the compulsions of the cold war created many a hurdle in the consolidation of freedom won by the third world countries, the transition to a new international world order has also not freed them from all anxiety about their future. This is a time not just of promise but also of potential pitfalls. It is in this sombre background that President Shanker Dayal Sharma has found it necessary to sound a note of caution. In his Republic Day message to the nation, he has referred to the danger of foreign interference in India's internal affairs. He has clearly in mind not merely the continuing sustenance of terrorism in Kashmir by Pakistan and evidence of a foreign hand in insurgent activity in the north-east but also instances of US-based terrorist outfits being blessed with words of solace from the White House itself. It may not be a deliberate policy of the US to promote destabilisation in India. But New Delhi cannot be indifferent to the disturbing fact that separatists have found it easy to maintain a channel of communication with President Clinton's aides. They have played on the American concern for human rights for their own nefarious purposes. White House officials have refused to be wary of the way they are allowing themselves to be manipulated to harm India's interests.

This suggests a continuation of the essence of the four-decades- old American policy towards Indo-Pakistan problems. In the past it consisted of humouring Pakistan just because the latter helped strengthen the American anti-Soviet strategy. Even if, in recent years, Washington has claimed to have been guided by a so-called evenhanded approach to this subcontinent, its practice has not ceased to be overly influenced by a sympathetic view of Pakistan's causes. The Pressler amendment, as the name itself signifies, was not the result of the administration's initiative. The administration has actually found it an inconvenient constraint. American praise for the democratic system in India from time to time cannot blind its policy-makers to the constant threat of its interests being compromised by the instinctive American habit of tilting towards Pakistan on all contentious issues.

The best way of countering this threat would certainly be to invest Indian diplomacy with some punch. The traditional way of trying to convince others of the justness of any Indian cause will not suffice. Every time the Americans say or do things which palpably go against this country's interests, no punches should be pulled in exposing their mischief. This style, sadly, is still alien to

Indian diplomacy as was amply clear from the defensive ring of protests against the latest anti-Indian manoeuvres in the White House.

Article Urges Dialogue on Kashmir Issue

BK0302100694 Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English 27 Jan 94 p 13

[By Bhabani Sen Gupta]

[Text] The U.S. Institute of Peace's [USIP] second dialogue on Kashmir perhaps signals a change in American perspectives of the conflict. The second dialogue was held in January 1994 almost exactly a year after the first one. As in the first dialogue, for the second dialogue too the U.S. Institute of Peace brought together for three days some 15 unofficial people from India and Pakistan among whom there were four Kashmiris from the two parts of the State.

The framework of the January 1993 dialogue was open-ended. It gave the impression that the U.S. was probing, if not promoting, the possibilities of an independent Kashmir, its security and autonomy jointly guaranteed by India and Pakistan. This impression was fortified in the subcontinent by the diplomacy of Ms. Robin Raphel, assistant secretary of State for South Asia, who added an edge to the conflict with her statement that the "entire State of Jammu and Kashmir is a disputed territory" and the accession of the State to India in 1948 did not change that position. The "concept paper" drawn up by the USIP for the January 1994 dialogue did reiterate that the "final disposition" of the territory of the State was still in dispute; however, it also made it clear that a resolution of the conflict in Kashmir could be attempted only within the existing political framework of the subcontinent. This important premise lent an air of reality to the discussions and promoted joint quests for ways out of the expensive bloody insurgency that has been savaging the Kashmir Valley since December 1989.

The USIP framework paper made several other points that were both realistic and constructive. First, the conflict could be resolved only "over time" and "step by step" through a peace process that was still to be introduced. Secondly, the gradual, incremental peace process must start with a significant reduction in the volume of violence. Several measures were needed for this constructive opening of a peace process, and these had to be taken both by the governments in Delhi and Islamabad and the Kashmiri militants. The USIP document suggested that the militants take the first step with a unilateral ceasefire and that the Indian government respond to it with a strong and generous reciprocity in the form of releasing political prisoners, a thinning out of security forces, gradually handing over the charge of maintaining law and order to the State police and stopping all custodial deaths. In between these measures by the two sides to the conflict in the Indian part of the State, Pakistan stops all material aid to the militants. Violence must be ended as quickly as possible without weakening the security of the State.

The participants agreed that the Kashmir issue had undergone a "significant" change with the outbreak of insurgency and Pakistan's involvement in it. The issue is no longer of exclusive domain of India and Pakistan or India and the people of the Kashmir Valley. In the new situation, "it is essential that the people of Kashmir are central actors" in a political process of conflict resolution "along with the governments and citizens of India and Pakistan". Implied in the foregoing sentence is recognition of three elements that make the Kashmir issue significantly different today from what it had been in the past. The conference document recognised that the Kashmiri people cannot be a single actor, because of the ethnic plurality of the population and its political division of the last four decades. There was also recognition of the fact that the conflict in Kashmir had to be resolved at several levels, each interacting with the other. This makes the peace process extremely difficult to build, and an eventual solution more complex than in the past. The two channels of dialogues as a prelude to negotiations link the governments of India and Pakistan on the one hand and the Indian government and the militants of the Valley on the other. In view of the emotional overloading of the Kashmir issue in both Pakistan and India, which makes it difficult for political leaderships to take initiatives that could run counter to widely held popular positions, unofficials have a role to play in bridging the gaps between the two governments.

There are several channels of unofficial dialogues between Pakistan and India but none whatsoever between Indians and the militants of the Kashmir Valley. This is particularly unfortunate. To be sure, individual Indians outside the government, especially those working in the field of human rights and civil liberties, travel to Srinagar and meet with militant leaders or cadres individually or in small groups. What does not happen is an open-ended dialogue between Indian who can influence government policies and leaders of representatives of the militants. The USIP provides an opportunity once a year for several Indians to meet with a couple or so of Kashmiris who are in contact with the militants and can speak their minds with a certain credibility. The USIP conference also provides Indians with an opportunity to meet a couple of persons from Pakistan held Kashmir, and Pakistanis to converse with Kashmiris from the Indian part of the State. However, two meetings are nearly not enough to bind the participants in silken bonds of trust and confidence so that they can speak with openness and candour and do not have to repeat the "national" scripts. Especially when the participants change from one conference to the next. Only three of the Indians who joined the 1994 dialogue had attended the dialogue of the previous January. It was the same with participants from Pakistan. But why must Indians depend on an American institution to come face to face with spokesmen of the militants in their own part of the State of Jammu and Kashmir which they regard as an integral part of their country?

Indian academic and other bodies must be able to bring together for a free exchange of views numbers [as published] of unofficial Indians and representatives of militants in Kashmir. If the militant bodies are in no mood to come to Delhi, a dialogue can be organised in Kathmandu.

India and Pakistan cannot isolate themselves from the impact of the end of apartheid in South Africa, the Middle East peace process, the Anglo-Irish accord to resolve the 200 year-old conflict over Northern Ireland. Ms. Benazir Bhutto could not persuade the leaders of China to support the Kashmiri people's right to self- determination. India may be able to "live with" resolutions adopted at the UN or elsewhere criticising its human rights record in Kashmir. How long can it be indifferent to the status damage it suffers as a result of the continuing bloodletting in Kashmir? How long will it take the rulers of India to realise how the Kashmir conflict is gradually militarising Indian polity and undermining Indian democracy?

The full-scale civil war in Afghanistan cautions external powers like the United States against the breakdown of political systems anywhere in South and Central Asia. Some militant groups in Kashmir talk openly about the establishment of a Caliphate spawning Pakistan, Afghanistan, Kashmir and the Islamic republics of Central Asia. This Caliphate concept is nourished by some of the fundamentalist groups fighting amongst themselves in Afghanistan. At the Washington meeting on Kashmir, the danger of reducing the State of Jammu and Kashmir to another Afghanistan was brought to the notice of all participants. This danger appears to be one of the factors that have prompted the USIP to suggest a resolution of the Kashmir conflict within the prevailing political framework in South Asia. India has a window of opportunity to bring the conflict under control and then translate it into a peace process. For this a number of unilateral initiatives on the part of the prime minister should be extremely effective.

A short ceasefire will not cost India a tuppence but may gain it a lot. The release of several hundred political prisoners will be another similar gesture of peace. An envoy of the prime minister could then conduct confidential negotiations with the All Parties Huriyat Conference. To encourage a dialogue, the Kashmir police could be given greater law and order responsibility in areas where it can function effectively. At another, simultaneous level the talks with the Pakistan government need to be pursued with increasing seriousness of purpose. The aim should be to conclude a basket of accords easing the much-flawed relationship towards normalisation.

Iran

Reaction to Attack, Shootings During Celebration Noted

Tehran Says Vigilance Beat 'Plot'

NC0202101494 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] The vigilance of the Muslim revolutionary people of Zahedan neutralized a plot by a few counter-revolutionaries who sought to overshadow the people's fervor and enthusiasm on the eve of the 16th [as heard] anniversary of the Islamic revolution.

These people congregated on Khayyam Avenue in Zahedan to agitate and disrupt things when the avenue's vendors and residents tackled them violently.

The agitators got into a brawl with the people but were overpowered by the Law Enforcement forces and dispersed. Pir Mohammad Abubakr, who threw stones at the disruptive elements, told an IRNA correspondent: The elements affiliated with foreigners are seeking to instigate differences to detract from the people's dazzling presence on the revolution scene and to project the Ten Days of Dawn celebrations as lackluster. He said: Whatever the plot the powers of world arrogance hatch against the Islamic revolution, the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran become more determined to safeguard the revolution's values.

Amanollah Ama'i, 42, said that the tearing up of flags, breaking of colored lights, and attacks on stores were only a sign of the arsonists' inauspicious intentions to disrupt the grand celebrations of the Ten Days of Dawn.

He said: We ask the Law Enforcement officials to combat such insurgents with force.

Despite the rioters' efforts to disrupt the Day of God [Yawm-Allah] celebrations on 1 February, the people continued to participate in the ceremonies at the 17 Shahrivar Stadium in Zahedan after the agitators were dealt with and the fracas ended.

CIA, Mosad Blamed

LD0202190094 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1620 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] The news of the shooting incident at the immaculate mausoleum of Imam Khomeyni, may God be pleased with him, on the first day of the glorious celebration of the 10 Days of Dawn of the Islamic revolution while the beloved president of the nation was making a speech, immediately caused a wave of concern among the faithful people of Islamic Iran. [passage omitted]

Hashemi-Rafsanjani is the comrade-in-arms of the eminent leader of the revolution and reminds us of the late imam. That is why that prominent revolutionary figure has always been the target of the enemies of the revolution in various forms. Today the enemy is focusing all its efforts on dealing blows against the holy system of the Islamic revolution and weakening the presence of the people in the arenas of the defense of the revolution.

The attempts to instill despair in the people, propagated in the past few months by the horns of world arrogance and international Zionism and spread in the society in various forms, contained the message that the enemies of the revolution are hatching an extensive plot to deal blows at the revolution and its foundations.

The incitement to revolt by certain saboteurs in Zahedan, which took place at the same time as the anti-revolutionary move at the immaculate mausoleum of Imam Khomeyni, may God be pleased with him, cannot be a coincidence. Such incidents can only be the work of organizations such as CIA and Mosad. They are the ones who, from the first day of the victory of the Islamic revolution, have girded their loins to destroy the Islamic revolution. But thanks to Almighty God, since the Islamic revolution and its movement has enjoyed divine support, once again the efforts of the conspirators failed and the leader and the ummah were joyful to hear that the beloved president is safe. The shouts of greetings to Hashemi were the people's crushing response to those who hatched that evil plot. [passage omitted]

'Conspiracy' Indicated

LD0202194894 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1730 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] In an interview with the Central News Unit, a reliable source has revealed new dimensions in the assassination plot against the Islamic Republic of Iran's president during the ceremonies at the immaculate mausoleum of his eminence, the imam—God's blessings be upon him.

According to that reliable source, the information that has come to hand indicates a planned conspiracy against the life of the president. He said more information on that will be given to the Muslim umma of Iran later.

Security Commander Comments

LD0302112894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] A few minutes ago, in an interview with the Central News Unit, one of the commanders of the security forces provided new details on the conspiracy involving an assassination attempt on the life of the president and the blows struck at the Islamic system by foreign affiliated counterrevolutionaries. Please pay attention to this interview:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] General, please tell our listeners about the latest investigations carried out and the information available on the attempt on the life of Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the president of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[Unidentified security forces officer] In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. First let me express my most sincere congratulations to the martyr-nurturing ummah and the esteemed leader of the Islamic revolution on the 15th anniversary of the dawn of the Islamic revolution, thanks be to God. In less than three days after the incident, new dimensions of the assassination attempt against the esteemed president have been revealed.

The assailant, who was an individual of corrupt morals, and his corrupt collaborators, who had committed many immoral acts as well as drug addiction and who were intent on the assassination of the president, were all arrested. The assailant and his collaborators had taken part in Friday prayers in Tehran on a number of occasions for this very purpose—to carry out their evil deed there. However, as the result of the vigilance of the Hezbollahi ummah and the implementation of security checks, they had not been able to carry out their evil plan there. Therefore, they made use of the great gathering of the people on 1 February, the anniversary of the first day of the Ten Days of Dawn, and of the presence of the esteemed president at those ceremonies, which had been announced in advance.

The assailant and one of his collaborators had entered the pure shrine of Imam Khomeyni, may God's blessings be upon him, in order to implement their plan. They then carried out the plot which everyone knows about. That man, who is a member of one of the anti- Islamic and antirevolutionary grouplets, and all the other members of the group who have been arrested, are completely against Islamic principles and the Islamic revolution. By firing a few shots in the direction of the podium, he was trying to carry out the plot, but thanks be to God, as the result of the vigilance, wrathful onslaught, and fast reaction of the Hezbollahi ummah the shots did not hit the target and the assailant was arrested by the people and handed over.

[Correspondent] General: We have heard in the news that the assassination attempt was premeditated and there is evidence of the involvement of foreign agents. Could you tell us some more about this, please?

[Security forces officer] Praise be to God and thanks to divine mercy, in the wake of precise intelligence work and the confessions of the assailant, all his accomplices and the planners of this disgraceful action have been arrested. All the evidence, files, and confessions indicate that the conspiracy was fully planned. There is other information on the next question you asked; however, for the time being, in order to safeguard the secrets of Hezbollahi ummah and for the sake of security expediency, we regret we cannot divulge them. God willing the martyr-rearing nation will be informed by us of the conclusive reports in the near future. [end recording]

Thanksgiving Prayers Slated

LD0202193894 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Once again, the enemies of the Islamic revolution have embarked on a feeble attempt to overshadow the splendor and greatness of the Ten Days of Dawn ceremonies and the glorious presence of the Muslim nation of Iran in the defense of the Islamic Republic of Iran. This time their criminal hands moved with the evil intention of attempting the assassination of the nation's loved one and the peerless companion of the leader, the popular president, in the sanctuary of the sacred tomb of the beloved Imam. Since the revolution and its movement are divinely supported and guaranteed by the Imam of the Age, may God expedite his advent, by God's grace and power, once again the efforts of the conspirators were ineffective, and

shouts of greetings to Hashemi and death to the hypocrites were the nation's crushing reply to that incident.

The Muslim nation of Iran will hold prayer services in all the mosques after tomorrow night's evening prayers as thanksgiving for the wellbeing of their beloved president, as well as to ask for a long life for the exalted leader of the Islamic revolution.

Confrontation Noted in Zahedan 1 Feb

LD0102204694 Tehran IRNA in English 1828 GMT 1 Feb 94

[Text] Zahedan, Feb. 1, IRNA—With the awareness of the revolutionary and Muslim people of Zahedan, the conspiracy of the anti-revolutionaries who created a disturbance here today on Khayyam avenue was nullified.

The shopkeepers and the people of Khayyam Avenue confronted and fought with the anti-revolutionaries who broke windows, tore Iranian flags and attacked shops and storefronts.

"Those who are hired by the foreigners are trying in vain to create a scene to make the active presence of the people look pale in the ten-day dawn festivities," said Pir Muhammad Abu Bakr, who fought against the anti-revolutionaries.

Despite the nuisance, the people of Zahedan here today attended a grand ceremony at the 17th of Shahrivar Stadium to comemmorate the victory of the Islamic Revolution of 1979.

President Says Regime 'More Stable Than Any Other'

LD0302125294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 3 Feb 94

[Text] The president has described the esteemed families of the martyrs and devotees as the greatest and strongest foundations of the Islamic revolution, safeguarding the gains of this sacred divine system. He added: The presence of these dear ones in society and in various arenas of the Islamic revolution act as an inspiration to the people and contribute toward reconstruction. He went on: The esteemed families of the martyrs, the devotees, and the war-disabled are regarded as a vast network, which protect the Islamic revolution and its holy and remarkable gains in society.

Speaking today on the third day of the auspicious occasion of the Ten Days of Dawn, which is named the day of devotion and martyrdom, and addressing families who have donated more than one martyr, the president went on: You have voluntarily given your dearest assets—that is, your sons—to be martyred for the path of God. You are, thus, the best examples of devotion and self-sacrifice. You have proved that nothing is more dear to you than the path of the Islamic revolution and the line of his eminence the imam, may God be satisfied with his deeds.

He added: Thanks to the strength given to the Islamic revolution by the martyrs, the devotees, and their families, the Islamic Republic of Iran is stronger and more stable than any other regime in the world, despite today's seditious world and despite so much resentment and hostility against us. Since the families of the martyrs are continuing the path pursued by their dear ones, this system's stability will increase daily.

Referring to the fact that the Islamic revolution of Iran has its roots in the hearts of all the members of society and other Muslim and deprived nations of the world, the president said: This revolution is not dependent upon individuals. Those who think that by eliminating certain individuals they can deliver blows to the revolution are mistaken; in the same way that after the passing of his eminence the imam, God's blessings be upon him, which was a great loss for the nation, the esteemed leader, Khamene'i, as a wise and aware leader took the reins of the leadership of this divine nation and decisively and vigorously continues the path and holy aspirations of the founder of the Islamic Republic.

He added: As a servant, I always feel indebted to the nobility, dignity, and the comprehensive participation of all the members of the public in all the stages of the Islamic revolution, especially the esteemed families of the martyrs, those missing in action, and the disabled. I hope that in the future I will be able to exert more efforts in helping these people.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani added: God has provided the leadership of the revolution and the steadfastness and self-sacrifice of the Iranian people as proofs and guiding lights for history and for those who come after us, so that the people of the world may see God's will with their own eyes and can use it as a model.

The president said: Negative propaganda and the expanding nature of the animosity and hatred of world arrogance toward the Islamic revolution have further strengthened and consolidated it inside the country, have encouraged the onlookers outside to make further studies of the amazing dimensions of this historic phenomenon of the present age, and have forced them to review their negative assessment of the Islamic revolution.

Praising the sublime status of the martyrs, those missing in action, and the disabled, and the patience and dignity of the members of their honorable families, the president said that by keeping alive the memory of the epic deeds of those beloved ones we will be able to awaken pure consciences. He said: Those acts of self-sacrifice have ensured the future of the revolution and the system of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The fruits of their self- sacrifice have made it possible that, alongside the efforts for reconstructing and strengthening the economic health of the country, the spiritual foundations of the society will also be further strengthened.

According to the Central News Unit report, at the beginning of this meeting, which was also attended by the families of the martyrs of the presidency [as heard], Hojjat

ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Rahimian, the representative of the vali-ye faqih and the head of the Martyrs Foundation, made a short speech in which he expressed his gratitude for God's grace and blessings in removing the danger to the life of the president. Amidst the crushing slogans of the families of martyrs condemning the conspiracies of the enemies and prayers for the health and well-being of the president, Rahimian said: The esteemed members of the families of martyrs and the disabled, through their dignity, piety, and detachment are trying to have an active presence and participation during the period of the reconstruction of the country, as they did during the period of the holy defense, Iran-Iraq war.

In these ceremonies, some of the children of the martyrs chanted revolutionary songs.

Tehran Criticizes Turkey's Cooperation With Israel

NC0102194094 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 31 Jan 94

[Unattributed commentary: "The Security Agreement Between Turkey and Israel"]

[Text] In a statement to the Zionist newspaper YEDI'OT AHARONOT last week, Prime Minister Tansu Ciller said: We support the concept of Turkey's strategic cooperation with Israel against terrorism and we do not hide the fact that we cooperate with Israel against the Hizbullah in Lebanon. We are not worried in any wa,.

Meanwhile, President Ezer Weizman said in Turkey: Israel is prepared to exchange information with Turkey on matters related to the struggle against terrorism.

Turkey and Israel have maintained relations since the occupation of Palestine in 1948. Ankara's relations with the Zionist regime improved further after the PLO concluded an agreement with Tel Aviv and autonomous status was given to Gaza and Eriha [Jericho]. That was followed by Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin's visit to the occupied territories. That was the first time a Turkish foreign minister had visited the occupied territories for 45 years.

Several political experts believe that the improvement of relations between Ankara and Tel Aviv should be assessed within the framework of the U.S. plan for a new order in the Middle East. The experts are convinced that Washington is directing pressure on the Arab countries in the Middle East to force them to coexist in peace with the Zionist regime. As far as Washington is concerned, that will establish a kind of peace that will safeguard U.S. interests in the region. Considering that, the political experts in Washington are trying to draw up plans for a rapprochement among the countries of the region, using pretexts such as the establishment of the Middle East [words indistinct] or the establishment of a common market in the region.

However, several political experts are convinced that the aim of establishing such organizations is to obstruct the strengthening of the activities of Islamic movements, such as the Hizbullah, which pose a threat to the interests of Western countries and reactionary forces in the region. The political experts are also convinced that, in addition to their struggle against the Islamic movements, the organizations will try to resolve the problems that threaten tranquillity in the region, problems that concern security, the water supply, and economic development. These organizations will be established through economic, military, and political cooperation between the Zionist regime, Turkey, and Egypt, the strongest allies of the Western countries in the region. They will be assigned two tasks to fulfill in the political and economic fields. Israel, Turkey, and Egypt have been assigned to cooperate to facilitate the establishment of a new order in the Middle East, as planned by the Western countries.

However, the Western countries and their allies have failed to realize a fact in the Middle East: the existence of the Islamic revolutionary movements, which are strengthening regardless of the strong pressure on them. U.S. and Zionist designs cannot obstruct those movements, even if certain countries in the region cooperate with Washington and the Zionist regime.

Tehran Views Israeli President's Visit to Turkey

NC0202221294 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 25 Jan 94

[Unattributed commentary: "Improved Relations Between Ankara and Tel Aviv"]

[Text] President Ezer Weizman arrived in Ankara for a four-day visit to Turkey on 24 January. Effective security measures have been taken to protect him. Weizman was invited by President Demirel. His arrival in Ankara is regarded as his first visit to a foreign country after he was elected to serve as Israel's president.

The officials in Ankara and Tel Aviv have described his visit as vital. Meanwhile, Weizman has said that his first visit to Turkey is very important for Israel.

It is common knowledge that the relations between Ankara and Tel Aviv have improved noticeably in the economic and military fields during the past few years. It is also common knowledge that the Zionist regime and the Turkish Government have maintained high-level relations for a long time. Turkey was the first Islamic country to officially recognize Israel on 28 March 1949.

President Demirel has said that the objective behind Weizman's visit is the improvement of relations between Ankara and Tel Aviv, which have existed since 1948. Several experts have linked the improvement of relations between Turkey and Israel to their common interests, stressing that the geopolitical conditions in the Middle East after the agreement the PLO reached with Israel have given momentum to the relations between the two countries.

Meanwhile, the Zionist officials believe that the strengthening of the Islamic movements in the Middle East pose a threat to Israel's security. In fact, Prime Minister Rabin

has recently described the Islamic movements in the region as a threat to the Middle East peace process.

Tel Aviv is convinced that Turkey plays an important role in the region not only because it supports the Zionist regime but also because it is an Islamic country governed by a secular administration and has significant water resources and advanced technology, which enables it to manufacture F-16 aircraft. As such, Turkey can meet Israel's vital needs. For example, it can supply water to Israel.

It has been reported that Demirel and Weizman have held talks on the joint use of water resources in the region, developments in the Middle East, the agreement between the PLO and Israel, and the improvement of bilateral cooperation between the two countries.

However, considering a possible reaction by Turkey's Islamic people, the Turkish officials must try to find a logical explanation for the recent improvement of relations between Ankara and Tel Aviv.

Other Relations Analyzed

NC0202192394 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Arabic 1730 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] Egyptian President Husni Mubarak and the accompanying delegation returned to Cairo from Ankara last night following talks with his Turkish counterpart and other officials. [passage omitted]

The Egyptian president's lightning visit to Turkey was his third since 1985. Yesterday's meeting between Mubarak and his Turkish counterpart reveals the nature of relations between Cairo and Ankara. The meeting was aimed at expanding the scope of political, economic, cultural, and military cooperation between the two countries. This cooperation is of special importance in light of the two countries' status in the region and of their relations with Israel.

The Zionist entity's President Ezer Weizman paid an official four-day visit to Turkey one week before Mubarak's visit. Weizman said that the Middle East's future is dependent on cooperation between Israel, Turkey, and Egypt. A number of political observers believe that such meetings are a preparatory step toward concluding a regional alliance that will give the Egyptian, Israeli, and Turkish Governments the right opportunity for confronting every possible danger and for implementing their own policies. The United States is supporting this step to strengthen the ties of tripartite coordination and cooperation. The spread of the Islamic trend and the Islamic forces' activities topped the items discussed by Turkey, Israel, and Egypt.

On the other hand, it can be said that strengthening Turkish and Egyptian relations with the Zionist entity prepares the proper ground for the normalization of relations between the other Arab countries and the usurper entity. It also prepares the ground for lifting the Arab economic boycott of this entity. This is quite evident to anyone who analyzes the political trend.

The Islamic trend in the region is the primary target of the policy of developing relations between Egypt, Israel, and Turkey. This policy aims to tighten the noose around the countries that exercise independent policies that are not linked to the imperialist forces.

Mubarak's Visit to Turkey Assessed

LD0202211594 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Egyptian President Husni Mubarak last night returned to Cairo after paying a one-day visit to Ankara.

Leading a high-ranking political and economic delegation, he met and conferred with his Turkish counterpart and also other officials of that country. [passage omitted]

Since 1985 this was the third visit of the Egyptian president to Turkey. The Tuesday visit of the head of the Egyptian regime to Ankara, besides confirming contacts and ties between Cairo and Ankara, was aimed at further expanding political, economic, cultural, and military cooperation and also at boosting ties.

This cooperation can assume special significance in view of the position of Turkey and Egypt in the region on the top of their ties with Israel.

Last week, Ezer Weizman, head of the Zionist regime, had paid a four-day visit to Turkey. Weizman, in connection with his Ankara visit, had commented that the destiny of the Middle East would be framed with the collaboration of Israel, Turkey, and Egypt.

Some political experts assess these contacts in line with the efforts to conclude a regional treaty through which the leaders of Egypt, Turkey, and the Zionist regime could counter the threats posed to them by uniting and also forging necessary coordination. Thus, they can execute their desired policy, which undoubtedly enjoyed the U.S. backing.

In this connection, Islamism and escalation of Islamic groups' operations are among the most important problems which are faced by Turkey, Israel, and Egypt. Also the ties of Turkey and Egypt with the Zionist regime can be examined from the angle that they can pave the way for normalization of Tel Aviv's relations with Arab states and also lead to the lifting of economic sanctions against Israel.

Hence, political experts analyze the strengthening of ties among Egypt, Turkey, and Israel within the framework of restricting independent and non-aligned policy and also jeopardizing the Islamic tendency in the region.

Khamene'i Rejects President's Amnesty Proposal

PM0202102094 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 30 Jan 94 p 5

[Unattributed report: "Khamene'i Rejects Rafsanjani Request To Issue Amnesty for Thousands of Iranian Prisoners"]

[Excerpt] Tehran, London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Iranian "Supreme Guide" 'Ali Khamene'i has rejected a request submitted by President Hashemi-Rafsanjani to issue a general amnesty for thousands of prisoners in Iran.

Sources close to the Rafsanjani wing have said that the Iranian president was hoping that the amnesty—coupled with new measures to ease the restrictions imposed on cultural activities—would help Iran to improve its image with regard to its human right records. But its seems that Khamene'i took the advice of hard-line factions opposed to any "sign of weakness."

Rafsanjani suffered another setback yesterday when the Majles Financial Committee announced its disapproval of the government's proposal to increase petrol prices from 250 riyals to 600 riyals—an increase of 22 cents. [passage omitted]

Azeri Official on 'Western Meddlings' in Azerbaijan

LD3101213194 Tehran IRNA in English 1848 GMT 31 Jan 94

[Text] Tehran, Jan. 31, IRNA—Head of Azeri Parliamentary Delegation, Sultan Mohammadov said today that Western meddlings and Russian support for the current "unpleasant" situation in Azerbaijan are two threatening factors for the republic's independence.

In a meeting with Deputy Majlis Speaker, Hojjat ol-Eslam Dr. Hasan Rowhani, he criticized international forums for keeping silent towards the five year-old Armenian aggression against the republic and accused them of adopting impractical measures.

He described Iran's Majlis as a "democratic, free and independent parliament" and said Azerbaijan could well benefit from Iran's experiences in the legislative field.

He appreciated Iran's assistance to the peoples of Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan and hoped for expansion of mutual relations in all areas.

Rowhani said that Iran condemns any aggression against the Azerbaijan Republic and believes that any change of borders will put regional security and stability in jeopardy.

Iran believes that military confrontations cannot bring any permanent settlement to the Karabakh conflict and that the dispute should be resolved through political and peaceful means, he added.

Rowhani stressed that Iran and Azerbaijan should promote bilateral cooperation especially in the economic, parliamentary, scientific and cultural fields.

He also expressed Iran's readiness to participate in economic projects in Azerbaijan especially in agriculture, industry, oil and joint operation in the Caspian Sea.

Officials, Azeri Group Note Relations

LD0102163494 Tehran IRNA in English 1531 GMT 1 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 1, IRNA—The Azeri head of Azerbaijan-Iran Parliamentary Friendship Group Sultan Mohammadov and Deputy Foreign Minister for Euro-American Affairs Mahmoud Va'ezi here today discussed role the two countries' parliaments in expanding bilateral relations.

Va'ezi said that formation of parliamentary friendship group has had a positive impact on bilateral relations. He also referred to mistakes made by the previous leadership of Azerbaijan. He added that certain elements who do not favour expansion of bilateral relations are spreading rumours.

Mohammadov said that Abulfaz Elchibey had uttered statements against Iran to please the U.S. "The Baku government has been working to improve bilateral ties ever since Gaydar Aliyev assumed power," the Azeri official said. He added that the Azeris have regained their identity and religious activities have increased remarkably.

On Karabakh dispute, Mohammadov criticized policy of certain countries towards the conflict and said they were trying to achieve their objectives by keeping Azerbaijan preoccupied. However, he added, Baku's recent victories have forced certain countries and international forums to take actions in order to end the clashes. Mohammadov thanked Iran for its political support for his country at the international forums and the assisting Azeri and Nakhichevani refugees.

Islamic Propagation Organization Hails Revolution Gains

LD0202155594 Tehran IRNA in English 1426 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 2, IRNA—The Islamic Propagation Organization (IPO) in a statement here blamed the world arrogance for exerting economic; military and political pressures on oppressed Muslim nations, Bosnians in particular.

The statement, issued Tuesday on the first day of the Ten-Day Dawn ceremonies marking the 15th anniversary of the victory of the Islamic revolution, said the world arrogance had not spared any attempt to trample upon the rights of the oppressed nations of the world. It further added that the anniversary was being celebrated at a time when enemies were hatching plots against it.

The organization underlined its respect for all materialistic and spiritual achievements of the Islamic revolution and for all who served the causes of the Islamic Republic. It called on the nation to actively take part in the ceremonies and, under the wise leadership of the revolution leader

Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i, continue their struggle against cultural assault by the world arrogance.

Paper Cites U.S. Efforts To Prevent Defense Cooperation

LD2801200194 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 28 Jan 94

[Text] The Pakistani newspaper THE MUSLIM has referred to the request made by the United States that various countries refrain from defense cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran and said: The Clinton administration is preventing the rebuilding of the Iranian army.

The paper notes the hollow claim made by the United States that Iran supports terrorism, adding: The United States forced Iraq to fight against Iran for eight years. Was this not an act of terrorism? Was this act not motivated by the wish to alter the balance of forces to the advantage of the regime occupying Jerusalem? However, now, when Iran is trying to rebuild its army after eight years of war, the United States has asked various countries to refrain from defense cooperation with Iran.

THE MUSLIM concludes by saying: The United States' confrontation with Iran is continuing and this has, in fact, resulted in Iran being strengthened.

Trilateral Border Security Meeting Begins in Islamabad

LD0202222094 Tehran IRNA in English 2140 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 2, IRNA—Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan opened a five-day trilateral meeting in Islamabad on Tuesday to consolidate cooperation on border security, the anti-drug headquarters at the president's office announced here Wednesday.

It said the ongoing meeting is being held at the proposal of the United Nations. An Iranian delegation is in Islamabad to attend the meeting.

The participants are studying the plan for strengthening border security cooperation. After the meeting the delegates are to visit the joint border areas and will later hold talks with Iran's Minister of the Interior 'Ali Mohammad Besharati in Tehran, it added.

Falling Oil Prices Cause $4 Billion Loss to Economy

LD0102172394 Tehran IRNA in English 1555 GMT 1 Feb 94

[Text] Semnan, Feb. 1, IRNA—Majles Vice-Speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam Hassan Rowhani said here Tuesday that due to fall of oil prices Iran lost dlrs. [dollars] four billion in its revenues in the current Iranian calendar year, 1372 (March 1993-94).

He added that in the current year's budget price of oil was set at dlrs. 17 per barrel, but the average price of each barrel of Iranian oil was dlrs. 14. Presently each barrel of oil is sold for dlrs. 11, he said.

Rowhani said that Iran lost dlrs. 6.4 billion in the course of the first five-year development plan due to fluctuation of dollar against other hard currencies.

On Iran's foreign debts, he said that the country has managed to solve the problem despite the problems created by the U.S.

Referring to the debate in Majles on the next year's budget bill, he said that in the course of the debates the deputies decided to set the government revenues at rls. [rials] 70,000 billion instead of the proposed rls. 80,000 billion.

He said encouraging export of non-oil commodities will do the country good and it is a national and Islamic duty.

He added that the non-oil exports this year amounted to dlrs. 5,000 million and proposed easing the present restrictions in this respect.

Deputy Minister Meets With Western Australian Official

LD0202212894 Tehran IRNA in English 2038 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 2, IRNA—In a meeting here Wednesday with Deputy Prime Minister of Western Australia Hendy Kuan, Iran's deputy foreign minister for Asia-Pacific affairs, Allaeddin Borujerdi, said Iran was ready to export nonoil products to Australia.

He said Iran looks forward to balanced trade reltions with Australia.

The visiting Australian official said his country would exert efforts for ensuring balanced trade ties with Iran.

He also expressed hope that relations between Iran and Australia would continuously develop.

Memorandum of Understanding Signed With Uruguay

LD0202182394 Tehran IRNA in English 1601 GMT 2 Feb 94

[Text] Tehran, Feb. 2, IRNA—Visiting Uruguayan Minister of Economy and Finance Ignacio De Posdas and Iran's Minister of Commerce Yahya ol-Eshaq here Tuesday signed a memorandum of understanding.

The document anticipates balanced bilateral trade as an element that will promote Tehran-Montevideo economic and commercial cooperation.

The two officials also expressed their interest to exchange information for improving cooperation between the banks of Iran and those of Uruguay as well as their chambers of commerce.

Based on the document Iran is to provide facilities for the re- export of Uruguayan products to members of the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS) and Caucasus countries.

Uruguay is also to facilitate re-export of Iranian commodities to South American states.

The memorandum forecasts participation of the two sides in international exhibitions in either country, export of Iranian oil and non-oil commodities to Uruguay in return for wool and rice.

Posdas, who arrived here on Saturday at the head of a ranking economic delegation, left here for home last night at the conclusion of his three-day visit.

IRNA Announces Maiden Issue of Publication

NC3101133794 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 23 Jan 94 p 3

[Text] The first issue of the publication "JOURNAL OF EVENTS" [DAFTAR-E RU'YDADHA] on art, literature, and culture published by the Cultural Review Committee of IRNA has been disseminated.

In the first edition of this monthly magazine a variety of articles of cultural interest have been included, such as: the Farsi language, books, publications, the theater, music, sculpture, the fine arts, Iranians abroad, and cultural events in the Islamic and Western world as reported by the IRNA representative offices abroad and from the mass media that conform to the tastes of those interested in the arts, culture, and literature.

SALAM Reports on Country's Media Publications

NC3001140094 Tehran SALAM in Persian 16 Jan 94 p 9

[Report on exhibition "The Face of Today's Publications" held in Tehran on 2-17 January]

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] AVA [call]: (Political, cultural and art monthly publication) specially devoted to Kordestan Province: License holder and editor in chief: Mohammad Hoseyn Asghar-nia. Most of the contents of this magazine, which is published in tabloid size, are on cultural, art and literary activities in Kordestan or an introduction to the poetry, books and writings of the authors of this province.

AYENDEH SAZAN [future makers]: (Political, literary, cultural, social, and scientific monthly publication specially for high school students) Editor in chief: Mas'ud Farahanian; editor: Mohammad 'Ali Shadmani; In each edition this magazine carries poetry, book reviews, science, art, and culture news.

ABRAR [just]: (Daily newspaper on political, social, cultural, and economic issues): License holder and editor in chief: Ghafur Gorshasbi. Each issue contains cultural, art, literary news with film and theater critiques, book reviews, cultural articles and so on. [passage omitted on magazines with fiction, other stories]

EFTEKHARAT-E MELLI [national pride]: (Bi-monthly political, social, cultural, sports, economic and religious publication); Editor in chief and license holder: Jalal Ghanizad; published in tabloid size and most of its issues contain cultural, art, and literary reports or reviews of works by Iranian and foreign writers and authors of today.

IRAN FARDA [Iran of tomorrow]: (Published once every two months, a political, social, and scientific publication): Each edition contains cultural, sports, economic and religious articles. License holder and editor in chief: 'Ezzatollah Sahabi;

BAHAR-E AZERBAIJAN [spring of Azerbaijan]: (Bimonthly publication that contains political, religious, social, literary articles and criticism) License holder and editor in chief: Mahmud Salehi; head of editorial council: Taqi Bahrami, Nowshahr; published in tabloid size; each issue contains news on literary, cultural, and poetic themes.

PAYAM-E ZAN [woman's message]: (Monthly) License holder: The Islamic Propagation Organization office at the Qom theological seminary: Editor in chief: Mohammad 'Aba'i Khorasani; editor: Seyyed Zia' Mortazavi; each issue contains art news, interviews with women artists and writers, guidance on handicrafts and so on.

PAYAM-E KETABKHANEH [the library's message]: (Pamphlet): License holder: Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance; editor in chief: Mohammad Ebrahim Ansari Lari; headed by council of writers; most of its contents are centered around cultural, literary, and art activities and in introducing the latest writings in these fields.

PAYAM-E HA?ER [Hagar's message]: (Bi-monthly publication on cultural, social,political, science, art, and cultural themes) License holder and editor in chief: [Mrs.] 'Azam 'Ala'i Taleqani; tabloid size with articles on cultural, art, literary issues, news of their activities, poetry, short stories, interviews with female writers and artistes and so on. [passage omitted]

PEYK-E ILAM [Ilam messenger]: (Political, social, and cultural publication devoted to Ilam Province) License holder and editor in chief: Mohammad Reza Morvarid; most of the articles on cultural themes are published in tabloid size and include news on art, cultural, social, and literary activities exclusively for Ilam Province. [passage omitted]

TA'AVON [cooperation]: (Economic, social, and cultural publication): License holder: Ministry of Cooperatives; headed by editorial board; most of its issues carry articles on art and literature and their connection with cooperatives. [passage omitted]

JAHAN-E ESLAM [world of Islam]: (Tehran evening newspaper): License holder and editor in chief: Seyyed Hadi Khamene'i; in addition to art, cultural, and literary features, it carries book reviews and articles on literary criticism. [passage omitted]

KHABAR (news): (Political newspaper with social, cultural, science, medicine, sports, economic, cultural, satirical, and critical articles pertaining exclusively to Fars Province) license holder amd editor in chief: Hoseyn Vahedipur; this newspaper carried news, cultural, art, literary reports which mostly pertain to Fars Province and to writers and artists of that province.

KHORASAN [name of province]: (Political newspaper with news, social reports exclusively devoted to Khorasan Province) License holder: Martyrs' Foundation of the Islamic Republic of Iran; editor in chief: Hoseyn Ghazali; most of its cultural and literary news pertains to Khorasan Province. [passage omitted]

RAH-E MOJAHED [path of the fighter]: (Monthly publication headed by editorial council) License holder and editor in chief: Lotfollah Meysami: [Known to be a member of the Iranian opposition Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization] This magazine contains articles on cultural themes, poetry etc.

RESALAT [mission]: (Political newspaper with cultural, social, economic reports). License holder and editor in chief: Seyyed Morteza Nabavi; in addition to reports on cultural, art and literary issues, the newspaper carries book reviews as well as writings by art and literature critics.

REY [name of place near Tehran]: (Weekly): License holder: Custodian of the holy 'Abdol 'Azim shrine; Editor: Dr. Ahmadpur Nejati; this publication is also published in tabloid size and has a special page devoted to "Art and Literature" which contains special reportage on art, literature, and cultural news. [passage omitted]

SORUSH [angel bearing glad tidings]: (Weekly social, art, literary and cultural publication) License holder: Voice and Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran: editor in chief: Engineer Mehdi Firuzan; each edition carries details of radio and television programs, stories, poetry, film reviews, articles on culture, art, and literature. [passage omitted]

SALAM [peace]: (Political morning newspaper of Tehran with cultural, social, and economic news) License holder and editor in chief: Seyyed Mohammad Musavi-Kho'iniha; in addition to the day's news, the newspaper carries reportage on art,literary and cultural activities, reviews of films, short stories, poetry, the theater, fine arts and so on. [passage omitted]

SUREH [chapter, usually of the Koran]: (Art and culture monthly): License holder: Art department of the Islamic Propagation Organization; editor in chief: Mohammad 'Ali Zam; the magazine carries news and articles on cultural, literary topics, stories, poetry, book reviews, literary criticism etc. [passage omitted]

SAFHEH-YE AVVAL [first page]: (Political, economic, social, and cultural monthly) License holder, editor in chief and editor: Mahmud 'Askariyeh; This magazine carries film reviews, introduction of artists and writers and critiques most of which are translations of articles from foreign publications.

'EMAD [pillar]: (Political, scientific, cultural publication exclusively devoted to Kermanshah) License holder and editor in chief: 'Ali Al-e Kazemi supervised by an editorial board; published in tabloid size and each edition carries reports on cultural, art and literary activities in Kermanshah. [frequency of publication not given]

FAJR-E KHAZAR [dawn in the Caspian]: (Social, scientific and agricultural weekly devoted exclusively to Mazandaran Province): License holder and editor in chief: 'Alimrad Vafa'i-nezhad; most of the cultural articles published in tabloid size deal mainly with literary and cultural activities in Mazandaran Province and in introduction of the authors and cultural figures of this province and their works. [passage omitted]

FARHANG-E TOWSE'EH [culture of development]: (Political, cultural, social, and economic monthly) License holder and editor in chief: Ahmad Mollazadeh; editor: Mostafa Tabrizi; carries articles on development in Iran and other countries. [passage omitted]

KAR VA KARGAR [work and the worker]: (Political, economic, social, and cultural daily newspaper): License holder and editor in chief: Mohammad Taqi 'Ali Hoseyni, also supervised by an editorial board; most of the contensts are on social, cultural and modern themes of today, issues pertaining to workers, reflecting their cultural and union activities, workers' associations in the country and so on.

MESBAH [lamp]: (Scientifc, research and specialization newsletter of the Hu?an Sciences Faculty at Imam Husayn University) License holder: Imam Husayn University: Editor in chief: Hashem Neda'i; editor: Mehdi Nazemi Ardakani; carries articles on culture, art and literature.

ME'YAR [criterion]: (Economic, social and cultural monthly): License holder and editor in chief: Seyyed Abolqasem Musavi; editor: Ebrahim Zalzadeh; contains articles, news, short stories, poetry amd mostly articles on culture, art and literature of interest to youth. [passage omitted]

MAHD-E AZADI [cradle of freedom]: (Theological, political, social, and literary newspaper exclusively dealing with East Azerbaijan): License holder and editor in chief: Seyyed Mohammad Mas'ud Peyman: most of the articles pertain to works of writers and artists of this province.

NEDA-YE QUMAS [call of Qumas—name of a district between Khorasan and Iraq]: (Social, cultural, and ideological weekly) devoted exclusively to Semnan Province. License holder and editor in chief: Ebrahim Vahid Damghani; supervised by editorial board; published in tabloid size; most of the contents pertain to the cultural, art and literary activities of Semnan Province.

NEHZAT-E SHOMAL [movement of the north]: (Political, social, economic weekly devoted to northern Iran) License holder and editor in chief: Hoseyn Khosrovani; published in tabloid size with articles on art, literary and cultural news of northern Irna.

HATEF [voice from heaven]: (Social, cultural, educational weekly of Gilan province) License holder and editor in chief: Zia' Bari Seyyedayn; supervised by an editorial board; published in tabloid size and most of the contents pertain to the art, culture, and literary activities of the Gilan province with introductions of the artists and writers. [passage omitted]

HAMSHAHRI [social, cultural and economic newspaper]: License holder: Tehran municipality; editor in chief: Gholamhoseyn Karbaschi; this publication carries art, cultural, and literary articles as well as dealing extensively with social, cultural and literary issues with stories, poetry, literary criticism, interviews with writers and artists etc.

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